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Move to cut spot price losses
denounced as 'vandalism'

Abolition of BNOC ends oil controls

By Michael Smith and Colin Brown

The Government is to abolish the British National Oil Corporation, the State-owned North Sea oil trading agency and effectively end its influence over Britain's oil prices.

The decision to abolish the corporation, which sets prices for up to 51 per cent of Britain's 2.4 million barrels a day of North Sea oil has been

negotiate their own prices on world markets for their North Sea production, and Britain will be the only one of the leading oil producing nations without a national oil corporation.

Ministers have decided to kill off the corporation because of the significant change in world oil markets during recent months.

The glut of oil on markets has meant that spot, internationally-traded prices have fallen well below official price levels, and left the British government nursing a loss of £70 million in recent months by continuing to support official prices.

Of the near one million barrels of oil bought each day by BNOC at present, only around 20,000 barrels a day are estimated to change hands at the official price. Yesterday afternoon UK North Sea oil prices stood at around £27.50 per barrel against an official price of £28.65.

MPs from the all-party Commission on Energy have criticised government policy for helping to prop up the fragile Opec pricing regime.

However, the Government has been able to offset a large part of the corporation's trading losses because between 75 per cent and 80 per cent of oil companies' revenues are returned to the Treasury in taxation.

Mr. Buchanan-Smith, the Energy Minister, said that the decision to abolish BNOC was a "kick in the teeth" for oil traders in Britain.

The decision has also set the scene for a heated debate when MPs discuss Government oil pricing policies in the Commons today.

The abolition means that the oil companies will be able to



Mr Gorbachev, the new Soviet leader, and the veteran Foreign Minister, Mr Andrei Gromyko, right, following the open coffin of Mr Chernenko to a grave by the Kremlin wall during the Red Square funeral yesterday

Waiting to press Gorbachev flesh

From Martin Walker in Moscow

WHEN the world's leaders buried Konstantin Chernenko in Red Square and filed into the Kremlin for the formal reception with Mr Gorbachev, Mrs Thatcher was the focus of attention.

After the Gorbachev visit to Britain in December, she can claim to be the Western leader who knows him best, while at last year's funeral of Yuri Andropov she was the star of the protocol show, the recipient of Mr Chernenko's warmest handshake and longest conversation.

But yesterday she did not repeat her triumph. She stood waiting in line for 30 minutes to shake Mr Gorbachev's hand and watched coldly as the Indian delegation, led by Mr Rajiv Gandhi, and the Chinese delegation were both thrust into the grade ahead of her. She waited long for the Soviet leader to shake her hand, but she was not to do so.

Gorbachev for 20 seconds, less than either Mr David Steel or Mr Neil Kinnock, who each received a warm greeting from the new Soviet leader. The American Vice-President, Mr George Bush, received 30 seconds — the same time as Mrs Marcos, the wife of the Philippines' President. President Mitterrand was granted 45 seconds.

Bringing up the rear of the hour-long queue came the American oil tycoon, Dr Armand Hammer, who knew Lenin, and yesterday met his seventh Soviet leader. "There are going to be a lot of changes here," Dr Hammer said later. "This new man is very alert, he's keen and he's eager. There is a great opportunity for a real improvement in East-West relations."

The Soviet State has inherited some marvellous settings for a party from their Tsarist predecessors. Mr Gorbachev, however, was a far more modest host. He had a small, simple room in the Kremlin where he met the Western leaders. Some 300ft long and 50ft high.

Dominated by six huge gilded chandeliers, and on the walls the gold-leafed names of the winners of the Lenin Medal of Honour, the great hall dwarfed even this rare gathering of world's leaders.

In Red Square — named in Tsarist times when red simply meant beautiful in Russian — almost all of the solemn pomp and majesty of the State was deployed to bury Mr Chernenko.

There were limits to the honours accorded to the dead leader. For the first time, a Soviet leader's pallbearers from gunnery to grave were not Politburo members, but plain soldiers.

The red-draped coffin was borne on a gun carriage from the Hall of Columns, where he had lain in state, and was handled by armoured car across the wide boulevard and up the slight hill into the Red Square. The Chernenko family, their travelling party, a sharp contrast to the slow, measured procession of their military escorts, followed the armoured car and the Politburo members who accompanied the former president on his last journey.

As the funeral cortege entered Red Square and the guard of honour presented arms, the soldiers who had carried Mr Chernenko's medals on a score of red silk cushions peeled off. The gunnery stopped in front of Lenin's mausoleum, and they lifted off the coffin lid at the precise moment that Mr Gorbachev and the rest of the Politburo emerged on the plinth of Lenin's tomb above him.

Meeting gives PM hope

From our Correspondent in Moscow

THE Prime Minister, Mrs Thatcher, came away last night from her meeting with the new Soviet leader hopeful that she had convinced him that the American Star Wars research programme was not an insuperable obstacle to improving East-West relations.

"I believe from my talks that the Geneva negotiations should result in success," Mrs Thatcher said after leaving the Kremlin. "He took the point very firmly that deployment of such weapons required negotiations under the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty, which is the very point I agreed with President Reagan at Camp David."

Almost the whole of Mrs Thatcher's 55 minutes with Mr Gorbachev were taken up with East-West relations, discussing space weaponry and the prospects of a new momentum at the Geneva talks.

Mrs Thatcher firmly rejected the new Soviet leader's first public appeal for a freeze on nuclear arsenals and on missile deployments in Europe. "We don't agree with the freeze," she said. "It freezes an imbalance, and a balance of forces is what we need."

Mrs Thatcher added that she felt that in the wake of Mr Gorbachev's visit to Britain last December and after her meeting yesterday that there was a possibility of a new special relationship emerging between Britain and the Soviet Union.

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Gemayel faces rebellion

From Julie Flint in Beirut

A Christian militia commander, with close ties to Israel, seized control of offices and highways in Lebanon's Christian heartland yesterday in a revolt against President Amin Gemayel's Syrian-orientated Phalangist leadership.

Although the RFBFI commander, Samir Geagea, declared in a communiqué that his militia held control of most Christian areas, unconfirmed Phalangist irregulars loyal to Gemayel were seen at checkpoints in the street of Beirut's Christian sector.

Geagea, who opposed the surrender of Christian privilege, demanded the dis-

Rebel MPs told of budget risk

By Colin Brown

Political Staff
Tory rebels were warned last night that a rebellion could undermine the Chancellor's budget next Tuesday, as the Government fought off a substantial revolt against further cuts in local authority capital spending.

The MPs, who have been demanding job creation schemes instead of tax cuts in the budget, were told that they risked upsetting the City with a possible run on the pound by openly challenging the government's economic policies.

They were also invited to private meetings with the housing minister, Mr Ian Gow, in an attempt to persuade them to drop their protests. The Government Chief Whip, Mr John Wakeham, is also understood to have been involved in the attempts to keep the revolt to a minimum.

The MPs were angry that the Government should reduce capital spending by councils when they believe more council building could cut unemployment.

They joined Labour MPs in opposing a government curbing spending capital receipts from house sales on further house building.

As a concession, Mr Gow told the Commons last month that the bar would not apply to money used to build council houses for sale.

Last night, Mr Patrick Jenkin, the Environment Secretary, made a further concession by offering to give a sympathetic ear to council leaders seeking to spend capital sums to counter serious housing defects.

Mr Jenkin said there was now an accumulated unspent total of £5 billion in receipts held by the local authorities. There was nothing to prevent the money being spent.

He went on: "It is central to the Government's case, that the pace at which they should be spent must be consistent with the overall judgment of public spending that the country can afford."

Attacking the Government's order as both "demonstrably stupid" and "damaging to millions of people, Dr John Cunningham, the shadow environment secretary, accused the Government of forcing local councils to return their own money in support of its political aims.

Thatcher leadership campaign hurt Heath

By Martin Linton

Mr Edward Heath was hurt to find out from a newspaper that Mrs Thatcher was to run against him for the leadership of the party, and at the way the campaign was conducted, he says in a television interview.

Mr Heath will give the fullest account so far of his defeat 10 years ago, and of his feelings about it, in a 60-minute portrait to be broadcast on Saturday. The campaign conducted against him, he says, was not carried out "in the way of colleagues."

He was astonished at Mrs Thatcher's use of television and radio and behind-the-scenes press campaigns and was stung by the rumour put about by her camp that he had said he was going to be Conservative Party leader for life, which was grossly untrue, he said, quite apart from being completely unfair.

"You can say I was simple and that I ought to have realised all these things, but I'm afraid I had standards," he says. He had worked with his colleagues for four years and there was an entirely different relationship between them, with none of the cabinet and Civil Service leaks that are commonplace today. "I think it was that which hurt more than anything," he says.

"But the other thing which perhaps upset me more was to find that after the election there were celebrations with champagne. I really don't

Match halted

The FA Cup quarter final match between Luton town and Millwall was halted for 25 minutes last night when the crowd spilled onto the pitch and the referee led the players back to the dressing rooms.

The trouble during the game was caused when some of the Millwall fans crawled into the open Kenilworth Road terracing, climbed partitions for a better view.

Before the game started, Millwall supporters had climbed perimeter fencing and used broken seats to attack Luton supporters in a stand.

The Millwall manager Mr George Graham appeared on the pitch to persuade his club's fans to return to the terraces, after his Tannoy plea had failed.

Reports, page 26

Governor backs suspect minister

By Patrick Kennedy, Diplomatic Correspondent

The British Governor of the Turks and Caicos Islands yesterday broadcast an unexpected message in support of the Chief Minister, Mr Norman Saunders, who was arrested in Florida last week on drug charges.

Mr Saunders has been in prison in Miami for the past week, awaiting a hearing before a grand jury which will today determine if there is a case to answer on drug charges. Another minister and a senior official are also being held.

In his broadcast, the Governor, Mr Christopher Turner, appeared to exonerate Mr Saunders in advance of the hearing, describing him in favourable terms as some one who had worked hard to ward off the attempted intrusion by international drug traffickers.

Mr Saunders is a highly regarded colleague with whom I had worked closely," he said, "not least in this Government's efforts to curb drug trafficking in these islands."

Mr Turner served in the Hong Kong administration, where he developed special expertise on methods of combating corruption. The Turks and Caicos come directly under the Foreign Office in London, but have advanced to internal self-government, with a small legislature and a ministerial system.

Whitehall officials last night said that the governor, at the request of Mr Saunders, had applied to London in 1983 for expert help in cracking down on the drug traffic, and had received a special budgetary allowance of \$455,000 for a two-year campaign.

A British police expert was recruited as senior adviser on narcotics traffic. More recently Mr Saunders had, with the backing of the Governor, ap-

pointed a drugs intelligence officer, also on secondment from Britain.

One theory in the islands is that Mr Saunders fell into an FBI trap because he believed himself to be on the trail of racketeers and thought he was setting a trap of his own.

The British Government feels that the first stages of the prosecution should not be subject to diplomatic intervention, but the Governor has reminded the Americans that Mr Saunders must be regarded as innocent until proven otherwise. A Miami court has set bail for Mr Saunders and his colleagues at \$8 million.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Shipyard collapse

READHEAD's, the workers' ship repair company, highly praised by Tory ministers, has gone into liquidation. Page 2.

Militant defeats

SUPPORTERS of Militant suffered two more setbacks with the failure of their candidates at Labour selection meetings in East Kilbride and Brighton. Page 3.

Famine threat

MALE lies in the drought-hit Sahel and is facing a famine on the scale of that in 1973, but still the country seems unprepared. Page 19.

£2m tennis prize

TOTAL prize money at this year's Wimbledon tennis championships will be almost £2 million, a 32 per cent increase. Page 26.

Dunlop loss

DUNLOP made a loss of £88 million in 1984. Page 22.

Peace force

CARDINAL O'FLAICH, the Primate of All Ireland, says a UN peace-keeping force should replace British troops in Ulster. Page 8.

The weather

SCATTERED showers, sunny periods. Details, back page.



"I didn't dare mention it on the telephone - but isn't Mr Gorbachev wonderful?"

Budget fiasco

JOHN CARVELL analyses the Greater London Council budget fiasco which is likely to have a long-term impact on political alignments on the Labour left. Page 4.

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Strike goes on in hearts of Kent militants

By Jonathan Steele

"MY father-in-law went back to work seven weeks ago, and I just won't speak to him now," says Eddie Horne, a 25-year-old miner at Betteshanger pit in Kent, perhaps the most militant in the country.

"We're not going to let scabs sit high and mighty in the bus to work," he adds as he defends the anger of his colleagues who spat and shouted abuse at the small group of strike-breakers when the strikers returned to the pit on Monday.

But Eddie Horne rules out any use of violence against the "scabs" and accuses them of exaggerating reports of intimidation. "We're not going to let them have themselves disqualified from work. Then they'll get paid off and that's just what they want," he says.

Few other families at Betteshanger are as divided as his, since very few men broke the strike. Sitting in their bare union office at the pit, union officials claim that the mine gave the strongest support for the strike. The few who broke that unity are now seeing much of the strike's bitterness focused against them. Yesterday the strike-breakers were allowed by management to go to work two hours after the faceworkers had gone underground.

Of 1,850 miners, only 30 were working before Christmas. Another 50 joined before the national delegate conference called off the strike. Kent's three pits are prime targets for closure as "uneconomic".

Betteshanger has the highest proportion of dismissals because of the closure of the pit, including most of the pit's union officials.

This led them to send flying pickets to Yorkshire last week to demonstrate against the national return to work. Although they later reversed this decision, thanks to the urging of the Kent National Union of Mineworkers branch secretary, Terry Harrison, no real work is being done at the pit.

Betteshanger is dogged by the fight over reinstatement and amnesty for sacked miners, by bitterness about the strike-breakers, and by the hardline policies of the new management which on Monday ended many of the miners' practices.

Men who work their shifts largely in water used to come up half an hour early, officials say, but this concession has been stopped.

Mr Harrison has been trying to moderate the anger against the strike-breakers. The real antagonism, he says, is directed against the 11 miners who went back to work early last summer, and particularly against Mr Bob McGibbon, whose wife is a local Conservative councillor. Miners at Betteshanger accuse him of masterminding a back-to-work movement.

He stomped off the strike lingers at Betteshanger. The women's support group is to continue providing hot meals for miners' families for another six months, funded by outside contributions.

"The miners' financial hardship is far from over," said Mr Chris Brindley, who helped to raise nearly £100,000 for Kent miners. He deplores violence against strike-breakers, but is convinced that they will all eventually be driven from Betteshanger by the animosity.

There have been three since the war — was a coincidence. Dr Brewster was a US special representative in Europe after the war, became a professor at Harvard in 1953, and was president of Yale until Mr Carter appointed him to London.

But he has already missed the chance to achieve the historic double of heading two great universities. The college said yesterday that at 65 he was already too old under Oxford's rules to be elected vice-chancellor. Before returning to private practice in New York after President Reagan's election, Dr Brewster praised Mrs

Failure of shipyard swallows up redundancy cash of 80 men

Successful workers' company goes into liquidation owing £250,000



The Readhead yard on the Tyne, which guaranteed no strikes or damaging disputes.

By Peter Hetherington, Northern Labour Correspondent

Eighty ship workers who ploughed their redundancy money into a new enterprise 17 months ago after the intervention of a senior minister, were facing the dole again last night.

Their widely proclaimed "workers' company", Readheads Ship Repairs, of South Shields, on Tyneside, went into liquidation with reported debts of £250,000 after the Government said it could not intervene a second time.

Readheads, into which the workers ploughed £110,000, was hailed by ministers and Conservative MPs as a shining example of a new economic order born out of the ashes of

nationalisation — in this case, British Shipbuilders.

BS closed the yard in 1982, but the workers lobbied hard and eventually a reluctant BS under pressure from the Department of Trade and Industry agreed to lease the facility back to the workers at a minimum charge.

In turn, the men guaranteed, in the company prospectus: "No strikes, no overtime bans, no demarcation disputes, sensible flexibility and minimum loss time. It is a workers' company... they have a real interest in its success because they have invested their redundancy money."

Readheads was a great success in terms of the ships it repaired and converted during its short life — 210 passed through the yard in 17 months.

But problems arose with four large contracts late last year. Mr John Lowe, one of the worker-directors who has been at Readheads since 1949, said they presented untold problems because of their size and the company, with little working capital, was plunged into a cash crisis.

Mr Lowe, a shipwright, added: "We were all like a family group. We all knew each other well and worked together over the years in the same place."

"We were convinced we could make a go of this. We had experienced nationalisation and didn't think much of it — we were so confident, and now it's all going."

The liquidator, Mr Len Gatoft, said last night: "Regrettably, the effect of the

present situation is that those members who have pooled their redundancy pay will have lost that money.

But they have demonstrated that there is a viable future for the yard here and this has been amply demonstrated by a most loyal and competent workforce."

But although the company was insolvent, Mr Gatoft said there was still a possibility that a neighbouring enterprise, Tyne Dock Engineering, would take over the Readheads yard.

This week Mr Norman Lamont, the Industry Minister who was instrumental in pressuring BS to lease the yard, turned down a request for emergency aid of £400,000 to save Readheads. But he expressed great sympathy for the workers' plight, as well as admiration for their cause.

Mr Patten also announced that the department will publish in May details of regional health authority plans to extend drug treatment in May, combined with a national assessment of drug abuse in England.

The survey should show where the country's black spots are, and also confirm evidence given to the select committee that drug abuse is now a problem in small towns such as Redditch in Cheshire and Peterfield in Hampshire, as well as in the big cities.

Mr Patten told MPs that he had no plans to allocate extra cash on top of the £10 million already earmarked for drug treatment. But he did promise that he would order all 152 district health authorities to set up drug liaison committees to help parents of drug addicts and the addicts themselves by the end of this year.

Mr Patten clashed with the Labour MP Mrs Rennie Short, chairman of the committee after she described heroin addiction as an epidemic spreading like a forest fire.

He told her that he did not agree that it had reached such proportions, and said that the department had no evidence that it was spreading so quickly. Government-sponsored research project will undertake a two-year investigation into the extent of drug abuse at the Wirral, Merseyside, following an appeal for help from the borough council, it was disclosed yesterday.

Liverpool University will carry out the project with a budget of almost £100,000 made up of urban programme funds and Home Office grants. The Local Government Minister, Mr Kenneth Baker, said: "We are aware that Wirral faces particular problems of drug abuse."

A solicitor and former England hockey international was gaoled for three years at the Old Bailey yesterday for fraudulently obtaining £204,000 from clients' accounts.

James Neale, aged 39, who pleaded guilty to six charges of theft, deception and forgery, was told by Judge Hazan QC: "What you did in these offences was disgrace to your profession."

He said that the Law Society had to pay £281,000 in compensation to Neale's clients. Neale, of Chitts Hill, Colchester, Essex, was said to have given the money to a car dealer, Leslie Cairns — known as Champagne Charlie because he kept vintage champagne in the boot of his Rolls-Royce.

Neale, aged 38, of Hague Street, Glossop, Derbyshire, passed the money to a property dealer, Mr Michael Lucas, aged 37, of Loamy Hill Road, Tiptree, Essex.

Lucas had benefited by £800,000, and faced a civil action.

Cairns, who admitted charges of theft and deception concerning two Rolls-Royces, a Daimler, and an Aston Martin, was gaoled for 18 months, with nine months suspended.

Mr Peter Beaumont, prosecuting, said that they put their land to "normal use," he said.

Mr Cazale told the judge: "Any decision which your lordship makes will have a very considerable impact beyond this case. A person who lets his property to stray over private property will be liable for trespass if these injunctions are granted."

Mr Louis Blom-Cooper QC, summing up for the league, said that "the public interest of stag-hunting — no matter how well-intentioned — cannot override the private interests of property owners."

"The personal assurances of the plaintiffs that they are prepared to prevent their hounds trespassing in the future, make no difference in this court."

Baron demands return of gifts 'worth \$77m'

BARON Helmut von Thyssen, who was divorced by his fourth wife last year, is demanding the return of \$77 million worth of jewellery, including her engagement ring.

The 63-year-old baron, who put his income at £10 million a year, regarded the \$500,000 ring as "investment jewellery," said Mr Thomas Scott Baker, QC, for the baron, in the Court of Appeal in London yesterday.

Now that the 17-year marriage was over, he was seeking the return of the ring and other jewellery, which he valued at over \$77 million, but which the baroness said was worth less than \$25 million.

He also wanted their \$4.5 million New York apartment and items of objects d'art and other valuables which he claimed the baroness had kept.

The financial dispute between the couple, in which 4-year-old Brazilian-born Baroness Denise Thyssen seeks provision for herself and their son, Alexander, aged 10, with whom she lives in Zurich, is to be heard at a five-week High Court hearing in London this year.

The baroness is asking the appeal court to order her ex-husband to disclose details of his wealth, which, she says, are crucial to the assessment of her financial entitlement.



Baroness Denise Thyssen—disputes value of gems

She was awarded a decree nisi last November on the ground of the baron's admitted adultery with a former beauty queen. Yesterday she appealed against the decision of High Court judge, Mr Justice Eastham, who granted the divorce decree, but refused to order the baron to answer certain specific questions about his finances.

Baron von Thyssen's business interests include chairmanship of the brewers, Heineken, and a number of German banks.

The appeal hearing is expected to last five days.

Heroin and cocaine ban may be extended

By David Hencke, Social Services Correspondent

The Department of Health and Social Security is considering banning all opiates from general prescription by doctors in a move to combat drug abuse.

At present only heroin, cocaine and diazepam are banned, and doctors need a Home Office licence to prescribe them. Mr John Patten, the junior health minister told the Commons Select Committee on Social Services that a medical working party on drug abuse had proposed extending the ban to include drugs including drug used as a heroin substitute.

Mr Patten also announced that the department will publish in May details of regional health authority plans to extend drug treatment in May, combined with a national assessment of drug abuse in England.

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Government 'misrepresented' report rejecting rates link to jobs

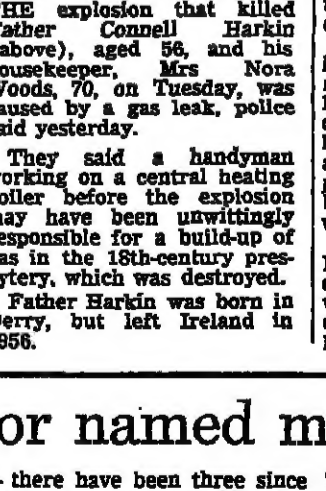
By John Ardill, Labour Correspondent

TUC leaders yesterday accused the Government of trying to misrepresent a report by Cambridge economists which found little connection between local authority rates levels and the location of jobs.

The report, first published by the Department of the Environment last week with a request to organisations, including the TUC, for more information on the effect of business rates on jobs.

A departmental press release said the study called for further research.

This was denounced by the TUC economic committee yesterday as ignoring the main findings of the study by members of the Department of Land Economy at Cambridge.



Mr Norman Willis the TUC general secretary said: "This is quite disgraceful behaviour by the Government (which) has long sought to blame everyone but itself for the rise in unemployment since it came to office."

Now we have a report which quite clearly shows up one of its arguments to have no foundation. Yet rather than accept it, the government tries to disguise its findings."

"The Cambridge work shows one of the major arguments for rate capping to have no foundation. Other recent studies have cast even more doubt on the claim that there is a direct link between jobs and such other costs as wage levels. It is time the Government took notice of the facts and forgot the prejudices on which its policies are based."

In a letter to the TUC, business, local authority and 25 names organisations, the junior environment minister, Mr William Waldegrave, asked for information about "on who the burden of business rates ultimately falls."

The report's authors, Paul Crawford, Stephen Fothergill and Sarah Monk, said their conclusions were based on "one of the most extensive studies of local employment change to have been undertaken in Britain, and a number of alternative measures of the rates burden."

The economic committee also warned that the Government would "forfeit the good will of trade unionists" over youth employment schemes if the Budget included withdrawing rates benefit from 16 and 17 year olds.

Louise accused refuse to go into witness box

All four defendants in the Louise Brown case chose not to go into the witness box to give evidence in their defence at the Old Bailey yesterday.

Mr Roy Amlot, prosecuting, said that the parents of Louise, a Down's syndrome baby, had spun a web of lies and deception about her disappearance. Despite persistent police questioning, none of the four had broken down.

Mr Amlot, making his closing speech, told the jurors that not only had Louise's father, Paul Brown, aged 30, who is on trial for her murder, and her mother, Susan Pullen, aged 30, lied about what happened, but so had Brown's brother Ian, aged 33, and his wife Brenda, aged 32.

Paul Brown, of Thorney Road, Streatham, south London, denies murdering two-week-old Louise on the night of May 26-27 last year. With Pullen, and his brother and

sister-in-law, he denies conspiring to pervert the course of justice by making false statements to police to conceal Louise's death.

Ian Brown is also charged with assisting his brother by concealing Louise's body. Mr Amlot has alleged that the baby was murdered after Paul Brown had had a lot to drink. Her body has never been found. The prosecution alleges that Louise's parents faked the theft of their car from outside a shop in Battersea Park Road, Battersea, South London, to cover up the killing.

The defence called only two witnesses. One of them, Mrs Joanne Bestford, a journalist, described seeing a baby being carried along King's Road, Chelsea, in a carry-cot on the morning Louise disappeared. The carry-cot, a "mauvey red," was exactly like Louise's.

The trial was adjourned.

NEWS IN BRIEF

BBC chief's admission

THE BBC chairman, Mr Stuart Young, has criticised a BBC news item about the battle for a £55 a year licence fee. He said the report on the Nine o'Clock News was misleading.

It concerned a study by accountants Peat Marwick into the BBC's value for money and said the firm backed the £55 licence fee request and found no overstatement. However, Peat Marwick said, they were not asked to comment on the level of the licence fee and that staffing was outside their remit.

Mr Young said: "I would like to correct the misleading impression given by BBC TV Nine o'Clock News, where the report was not as accurate as it should have been. There is no doubt about that. But equally I would like to say that the Peat Marwick report does give the BBC a clean bill of health."

The alternative to a £19 increase in the licence fee would be programme cuts, he said on the Emmy Young Show on Radio 2.

He also denied that the decision to temporarily shelve Doctor Who was an attempt to put pressure on the Government to grant the full licence increase. A new series would like to say that the Peat Marwick report does give the BBC a clean bill of health.

Salmonella death

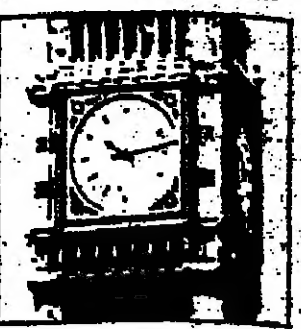
A WIDOW, aged 80, has become the third person to die from Salmonella poisoning at Whitley Hospital, Coventry, at Walsgrove Hospital in the city.

Falklands posting

AIR Commodore Richard Kinniburgh will take over as Commander of the British Forces on the Falkland Islands in August. Air Commodore Kinniburgh, commander of the RAF central flying school, will succeed Major General Peter de la Cour de la Billiere.

From Russia

THE REV Walter Drans, aged 55, vicar of Chalfont, near Stroud, Gloucestershire, said yesterday that his Soviet wife, Lyudmila, 34, had been given permission to join him permanently in Britain with her daughter, Katia, aged four.



David McKie

Powell bill gets a good innings

THE committee on Enoch Powell's Unborn Children (Protection) Bill was developing yesterday into the kind of grim and unrelenting struggle which the House of Commons used to be when Yorkshire and Lancashire still counted for something.

There is no doubt about Enoch's superior strength: 11 members in a committee of 18 backed the bill on the second reading.

His problem has always been time. But he's hugely helped himself, first by steering the bill into committee faster than anyone expected and then by getting a timetable which already yesterday — in only the second week — was expected to keep it sitting long into the night.

All the minority members can do is to table as many amendments as they can, generate the maximum number of separate debates, and keep those debates running.

Parliament, page 25

For well over an hour they kept the argument going. The bill's supporters set the first debate. Within 10 minutes at least two debates on this collection rather than one? He wouldn't. One up to Mr Powell.

For the rest of the time, he glowered impassively, raking the tapestries on the committee room wall with his unrelenting stare till you almost expected them to shrivel away out of sheer shame.

As in the first session last week, Mr Powell rose just before they broke for lunch to move the closure. But this time the chairman wouldn't accept it.

That is going to be the pattern. The progress of the bill could crucially depend on the time the chairman allows for each debate.

The chairman is David Knox, a gentle, ultra-wet Scottish Tory who represents Staffordshire Moorlands, and who, in this tight spot, had little to help him but his own wit and judgement — almost as though he were trying to umpire a Roses match unsupported by the laws of cricket.

The five who fought the bill yesterday hope to have the formidable Leo Abse (crossed yesterday) back next week. And they have an influential ally in the Health Minister, Kenneth Clarke, who, though always resisting the Government's neutrality, made his support for the bill and support for the amendments powerfully clear yesterday.

Downstairs, the Commons agonised over whether to refer a Times story disclosing a draft report from the Home Affairs Select Committee to the Committee on Privileges.

The committee chairman, Sir Edward Gardner, who advocated that move, found several supporters including the Liberal Alan Beith, though most made it clear it was the Mr who leaked, not the journalist who reported, they were after.

Michael Foot was all against it. They could summon the journalist but he'd never reveal who told him. They'd better to conclude as the Commons once did faced with the sustained impudence of John Wilkes — that as they weren't going to win, they'd better to forget it.

Dennis Skinner, who's against privilege of all kinds, thought so too. The leader warned the Government benches — might turn out to be Tory. What about Sir Edward himself? "He put up the classic defence — it could be him."

But that was a denouement which the Commons, by 268 votes to 109, was apparently ready to risk.

Ex-ambassador named master of Oxford college

By John Eard

Dr Kingman Brewster, President Carter's ambassador to Britain from 1978 to 1981, is to be the next master of University College, Oxford.

Yesterday's announcement of his election by the fellows gives the college its second American master since the war. Dr Brewster will succeed Lord Goodman, aged 71, who retires in the summer of next year.

He is an international lawyer, like his fellow-American the late Dr A. L. Goodhart, who was master from 1951-1963. The college said yesterday that the preponderance of lawyers among recent masters

— there have been three since the war — was a coincidence. Dr Brewster was a US special representative in Europe after the war, became a professor at Harvard in 1953, and was president of Yale until Mr Carter appointed him to London.

But he has already missed the chance to achieve the historic double of heading two great universities. The college said yesterday that at 65 he was already too old under Oxford's rules to be elected vice-chancellor.

Before returning to private practice in New York after President Reagan's election, Dr Brewster praised Mrs

Thatcher's administration — then two years old — as "the first British government since 1945 that has seemed to be playing on the world stage with some confidence."

But he added after his three years of Britain-watching: "I admire the capacity of the British to put up with austerity if they think it's in the national interest. But that doesn't mean they're supine and that their patience doesn't have limits."

"I don't think it's at all clear that this degree of social dislocation is not going to result in exasperation. The Government knows the risk."



Kingman Brewster—former president of Yale

HOME NEWS

Hopes of Scottish power base crushed

Militant Tendency loses key selection battles

By Martin Linton

Militant Tendency supporters have suffered two more setbacks in Labour Party selection meetings and may field fewer candidates in the next election than they had in 1983.

Hopes of building a power base in East Kilbride, Scotland, came to nothing this week, when the constituency party selected a supporter of the soft left and a declared anti-Militant.

Mr Adam Ingram, the Labour leader of the district council, was by 20 to 20 over the leader of Stirling council, Mr Michael Connery.

The candidate supported by Militant, Glasgow councillor, Mr Rob McKenzie, was pushed into third place with 10 votes. Mr Ingram, a Glasgow official, hopes to succeed Dr Maurice Miller, who is retiring after 20 years as an MP.

More disappointing for Militant was the defeat of its candidate at Brighton Kempdown. Mr Rod Fitch, by a local councillor, Mr Steve Bassam, a left-winger with no sympathy for Militant.

Kempdown was for many years Militant's main power base in the Labour Party because of its strong organisation at Sussex University, but it is no longer a seat that Labour has much chance of winning, having a Conservative majority of 9,378.



Rod Fitch—Brighton defeat

Militant suffered a third setback at the annual conference of the National Organisation for Labour's "left" wing when its candidate for chairman was defeated by Sarah Boyack from Scotland by 160 votes to 55. Militant's opponents claim there was a strong backlash against the Federation's tactics during the miners' strike.

Mr John Speller, who won Birmingham Northfield for Labour in a bye-election, and was defeated in the general election, was re-elected as its candidate at the weekend after a

close fight. He is one of the most outspoken critics of Militant in the Labour Party and is an EETPU official.

Labour still has to select more than half its candidates and Militant hopes for a number of seats, but the results so far have shown no gains for the far left. A particularly significant result at the weekend was the selection of Mr Willie Bach, at Sherwood in the heart of the Nottinghamshire coalfield, by a substantial majority over Mr Graham Skinner, the brother of the Bolsover MP, Mr Dennis Skinner.

Mr Skinner was a striking miner and many members of the Sherwood Labour Party, including its secretary, Mr Terry Richardson, were working miners, which strongly influenced the selection in favour of Mr Bach, a barrister from Leicester who fought the seat in 1983. It has the highest number of pits in the country and is held by the Conservatives by 658 votes.

In Wolverhampton South-east, the leftwinger and oldest Labour MP, Mr Robert Edwards, a veteran of the Spanish Civil War, will be succeeded as candidate by a former steel worker, Mr Dennis Turner, the social services chairman on the city's council and politically in the middle of the party.



Sir Robin Day, with Matron Mrs Liz Birnie, leaving hospital yesterday after a heart bypass operation. The broadcaster said that he might consider retirement, especially after such serious surgery. Sir Robin, aged 61, had grafts from his leg fixed into six coronary arteries at the Wellington Hospital, north London, 12 days ago.

O Fiaich calls for UN force in Ulster

From Gareth Parry in Belfast

A United Nations peace-keeping force should replace British troops in Northern Ireland, Cardinal Tomás O Fiaich, the Primate of All Ireland, says in a television interview to be broadcast next Sunday, St Patrick's Day.

Cardinal O Fiaich has just returned from the United States where last weekend he called for a united Ireland and British military withdrawal. His statement prompted angry criticism from both sides of the border.

The cardinal's suggestion is made during a programme for Channel 4, Irish Angle, which was recorded last September.

Part of the transcript released by the makers of the programme yesterday quotes him as saying that he does not consider the Northern Ireland problem insoluble.

"I have enough confidence in Northern Protestants to feel that one day we will understand each other sufficiently to be able to work together."

The cardinal says that religion is frequently a convenient label given to a situation which he sees not as a religious struggle, but as a conflict between two identities with economic and social overtones.

Brittan tightens grip on parole

By Malcolm Dean

The tougher parole procedures announced by Mr Leon Brittan, the Home Secretary, at the Conservative Party conference in 1983 are biting, according to monitoring statisticians.

Only 13 offenders sentenced to more than five years for drug trafficking or crimes of violence received parole before their final review in the first six months of last year, compared to 113 in the same period in the previous year.

Some of the offenders who were turned down may have received two months' parole at their final review last year, but in the previous year they would all have received eight months parole, or more. Some, with long sentences, would have received up to two years or even more.

The figures suggest that the annual number of offenders who will be denied parole under the new procedures will be about 200, compared to the 240 estimated by the Home Office last year.

The statistics do not show whether the Home Secretary is rejecting a larger number of Parole Board recommendations for release. This will become apparent only with the publication of the board's annual report in June. But the board agreed late in 1983 to follow the Home Secretary's new criteria.

The tougher approach to violent offenders was matched with a more liberal approach

to minor offenders by extending the eligibility of parole from sentences of 18 months to nine.

This policy was introduced last July when the prison population dropped by 2,000. About 8,000 extra prisoners are receiving parole each year under this procedure.

Mr Paul Cavardino, press officer of the National Association for the Care and Resettlement of offenders, said yesterday that there was no justification for ending the parole opportunities of serious offenders.

"This will not reduce violent crime, because under the old procedure the statistics show that the offenders were being released without endangering the community. All it is doing is increasing tensions in the prisons," he said.

Nurse jumped from flats

A nurse who feared that she had made a mistake that could have killed a child committed suicide by jumping from a tower block after being admitted with depression to a psychiatric hospital, a Birmingham inquest decided yesterday. A child became slightly ill after some surgical tubing was not correctly cleaned, but Dorothy Adamowicz, aged 25, of Moseley Birmingham, began imagining that the youngster had died and resigned soon afterwards.

Joseph forces city to keep school open

By Alan Dunn

The Government has stepped in to prevent a 277-year-old school from being closed under education reorganisation plans by Liverpool city council.

Bluecoat School is to remain voluntary-aided, backed by an annual income of £750,000 from the council, when the city's secondary schools are reduced to 17 neighbourhood comprehensives in the autumn. It was to have closed next year.

In a letter to the Labour-controlled council, Sir Keith Joseph, the Education Secretary, commends the school as one of "proven worth," with sixth-form results of a very high standard.

More than 200 of the 700 pupils are in the sixth form, from which some 70 go on to university each year. There are 140 boarders.

A petition signed by more than 45,000 people in support of the school was sent to Sir Keith, who also received a delegation of parents, staff, and governors.

"It has been a big campaign but well worth while," said Mr James Davies, the first deputy head, yesterday. "We are very

pleased that Sir Keith has decided to allow us to carry on as we have done."

Last year, the chairman of the city's education committee, Mr Dominic Brady, acknowledged that the school was doing an excellent job "in circumstances that are more advantageous than those at other schools in the city."

A Labour councillor, Ms Felicity Dowling, said that the city would not be putting money into privilege. "We are not prepared to have one school that stands out from the pattern," she said.

Mr John Hamilton, the council leader, said yesterday that Sir Keith's ruling displayed duplicity. "We are being forced to keep open a school that we do not need and put the charges on the ratepayers."

Mr Hamilton said that the school's worth was nearly £5 million when Mr Patrick Jenkin, the Environment Secretary, is advising us to cut back. Labour now intends to examine its legal right to remove the charge from the ratepayers. "If we can avoid spending on the school we shall do so," Mr Hamilton said.

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From the Listening Bank

Leeds to spend extra £4m on education

By Michael Parkin

Leeds City Council will spend an extra £4 million on education this year because the Government does not take its responsibilities seriously and we have to act unilaterally in defence of children," Mr Geoff Driver, the education committee chairman, said yesterday.

In spite of falling school numbers, the committee is planning to appoint 50 new teachers and to retain the posts of a further 160.

Mr Driver said that the Department of Education would recommend that these posts should not be filled because of falling rolls.

The extra teachers will be used to improve teacher-pupil ratios and to enlarge the curriculum. Many of them will help the 35 per cent of school children who need special teaching help.

Part of the money will go on giving children free meals during holidays in the summer. The city is the largest number of free school dinners is served; increasing spending on school clothing; an extra £500,000 for sport and cultural teaching; and raising the capital allowance—the money spent on books and equipment—by 25 per cent.

Cambridge entrance going

By John Fairhall, Education Editor

The Cambridge colleges' admissions examination, which is taken by more than 50 per cent of applicants to the university, will be held for the last time in November.

A new admissions system will be more in line with the standard Universities Central Council on Admissions procedure used by most universities.

Cambridge colleges will offer places, either conditional offers for pre-A-level candidates or firm offers for those who have their grades already.

Conditional offers may depend on performance in either 5-papers or on a new set of sixth term examination papers, being offered jointly by the Cambridge Local and the Oxford and Cambridge GCE Boards.

The first of these new sixth term examinations will be held in May 1987.

Pubs now living off their grub

By Dennis Barker

THE SOCIAL function of the British public house has changed radically in the past two years, with food sales increasing enormously, according to a survey published today.

Egon Ronay's Gudmunds Pub Guide, which includes the survey of 700 representative pubs, says that 85 per cent of those polled claimed that they could not survive without food sales. A quarter had increased their food turnover by 50 per cent.

There are more pubs with facilities for children, according to the guide. Of the landlords in the guide, 88 per cent said they favoured serving families with children.

Bar food has improved, with fewer bought-in pies. There are few good chips served in British pubs, according to the guide.

Of 700 pubs who answered questions about changes in the licensing laws, 50 per cent wanted no change.

The Royal Oak hotel, in Yarmouth, Norfolk, which is only two miles from Egon Ronay's country home, won the award for Pub of the Year. Egon Ronay's Gudmunds Pub Guide, Gudmunds, Accommodation, Mitchell Beazley, £3.95.

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A time for condolences: the US Vice-President, Mr George Bush, with the new Soviet leader, Mr Mikhail Gorbachev; Mrs Thatcher greets the Russian leader at a Kremlin reception; and near Lenin's tomb at the Red Square funeral of Mr Chernenko, Mr Gorbachev ponders on what lies ahead

£3.15 billion to be spent on agriculture over five years

EEC farm ministers vote for conservation grants

From Derek Brown in Brussels

European Community agriculture ministers yesterday agreed to a £3.15 billion investment on farm improvement grants.

The agreement was made after many hours of detailed wrangling and the money will now be spent over the next five years on modernising farms, improving land, and encouraging efficiency.

A key part of the package for Britain is EEC approval for national grants to be paid to farmers to protect the countryside.

The conservation grants will be available in areas designated as being of special interest, amounting to no more than 2 per cent of land area in Britain. They are expected to make particular impression on areas like the Somerset Levels, which have been threatened by drainage and ploughing in the cereal producing "prairies".

In return for the grants,

farmers will have to promise to maintain existing land usage, such as grazing, and not to increase stock numbers. Britain has long pressed for conservation grants to be included in the EEC package of structural funds. The main thrust of yesterday's deal, however, to ensure continued

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spending measures, will increase farm output rather than restrict it. The deal is worth nearly £1 billion more than the last five year package.

It was agreed after finance ministers of the Community, charged with imposing effective curbs on the overall cost of EEC farm policy had decreed an upper limit of £3.15 billion.

There followed bitter argument among the farm ministers about the principle of budgetary discipline, and sharp disagreement over the proportion of the new package to be

spent on impoverished Mediterranean regions.

Greece, supported by Italy, maintains that the new package does not contain nearly enough cash for the Community to honour its pledge to increase Mediterranean aid.

Although that issue has been fudged, the agreement on structural funds has a clear path for ministers to make more general farm budget reforms. It is a particular triumph for the Italian President of the Council of Farm Ministers, Mr Filippo Pandolfi.

He has already notched up two negotiating breakthroughs this year, on measures to help drain the Community's lake of surplus milk and wine. Throughout those debates and the latest complex disagreement about funds, he has impressed other ministers with his skill and determination.

But Mr Pandolfi's hardest battle is still to come. On March 25 he will open yet another farm council meeting, almost exclusively concerned

with fixing farm prices for 1985-6.

The annual price fixing process is always difficult for ministers, caught between the perpetual need to economise, and the voracious demands of farmers and their political supporters. This year, the battle has been intensified by the EEC Commission's bid to freeze the total price package at a total of £12 billion.

In the European Parliament yesterday, the proposed freeze was bitterly attacked by the author of a report on farm prices, a French Communist MEP, Mr Pierre-Benjamin Pranchère. He said that if the plan were approved, farmers would be driven to the dole queue.

At the same time, he remarked the EEC still made "stretched payments" to the United Kingdom.

The Commission proposals, which will be voted on tonight, were defended by British Conservatives, while Labour MEPs said that they did not go far enough to protect consumers.

No force in name changing

For our own Correspondent in Geneva

US and Soviet arms negotiations prepared for their first full session of talks today, but appear not to have settled details of the format of future meetings.

Mr Joseph Lehman, spokesman for the US delegation, said the second meeting would involve the full delegations of two countries, a total of 20 people.

Mr Max Kampelman, the head of the US delegation, and the other US army control negotiators were still luxuriating yesterday in the warm afterglow of the expressions of confidence heaped on them by the Senators and Congressmen who arrived in Geneva for Tuesday's opening of the new US-Soviet talks.

The congressional leaders left yesterday, but they gave the kind of bipartisan backing to these negotiations which President Reagan had hoped for when he encouraged them to come as observers.

The congressional visitors concluded that the Administration intends "to negotiate in good faith." While the President's Strategic Defence Initiative remains controversial, the Congressmen thought that he would get at least a substantial part of the funds the Administration is seeking for the initial research stage of the Star Wars programme.

The Senators also said that "there is now a broad consensus for going ahead with the research into the feasibility of defensive space weapons."

They backed President Reagan's view that the Soviet Union must be held to account for alleged violations of existing arms control treaties before any new attempts can be made here to negotiate new treaties, or to discuss the affirmation of the 1972 anti-ballistic missile treaty.

"The Soviet Union must understand," the Senators insisted, "that if it genuinely wants to talk to produce an agreement that can be ratified, it must be more forthcoming in responding to US

US Senators back Reagan on arms talks

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"The Soviet Union must understand," the Senators insisted, "that if it genuinely wants to talk to produce an agreement that can be ratified, it must be more forthcoming in responding to US

démarches on the violations issue, and in halting prohibitive strategic activities."

The Senate must ultimately ratify any agreement reached in Geneva. The Administration does not want a repetition of the situation over the 1979 SALT II Treaty, or the 1974 Threshold Test Ban Treaty, which were never submitted for ratification because of the certainty that they could not in the required two-thirds Senate majority.

This time, the Administration wants to draw Congressmen into the negotiating process with the aim of ensuring

THE Soviet Union has deployed another 18 SS-20 missiles in Eastern Europe, raising the total to 414, Pentagon officials said yesterday.

broad Congressional support for appropriating funds for the Star Wars programme.

The Senate has set up an arms control observer group with five members each from the Republican and the Democratic parties. The co-chairmen are Republican Senator Ted Stevens and Democratic Senator Sam Nunn. They will have a permanent staff in Geneva and the senators themselves in Washington to monitor the negotiations.

For the opening of the talks this week, almost the whole group of senators was here, and to add more weight, they also included the Senate majority and minority leaders.

The groups from the House of Representatives numbered only seven members, but was led by the House majority leader, Mr Jim Wright.

None of the congressmen could be drawn on his reaction to President Reagan's insistence that the Star Wars research programme is not negotiable, and not available to Soviet offers for radical reductions of offensive nuclear weapons.

Welcome for UK chemical move

From Hella Pick in Geneva

Britain's latest effort to inject momentum into negotiations on a chemical weapons ban treaty has won wide approval at the UN Disarmament Committee which groups 40 countries.

"It is a very useful contribution in the right direction," said one senior diplomat who normally finds himself criticising Britain and the Allies.

There is no hint yet that the Soviet Union is prepared to accept the essence of the British proposal—to set up a permanent system of routine inspections of chemical plants, making substances that might be diverted from industrial use to the illicit manufacture of chemical weapons.

Mr Richard Luce, the Minister of State at the Foreign Office, outlined the British proposal during the UN committee's session on Tuesday and held several private meetings with other representatives.

The idea is to pattern inspection of chemical plants on the experience of the International Atomic Energy Agency

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in Vienna, which routinely inspects nuclear power reactors to ensure that no nuclear fuel is diverted to the manufacture of nuclear bombs.

Last month, the Soviet Union, for the first time, signed an agreement with the IAEA to permit inspection of at least four nuclear reactors in the Soviet Union. Britain hopes that this decision might set a precedent for allowing on-site inspection of Soviet chemical production units by international observers.

Mr Luce emphasised that routine inspections capable of generating confidence would reduce the need for "challenge" inspections which the Soviet Union has resisted.

A US draft treaty for a chemical weapons ban, tabled last year, proposes challenge inspections of government-owned plants at only 24 hours' notice. The Americans contend that such an arrangement is a vital instrument of verification.

But there is consensus in the UN disarmament Committee that the American proposal is unrealistic because the Communist bloc countries would never accept it. Britain, like the other NATO allies, has not been willing to criticise the US draft in public.

The new British proposal is seen as an indirect comment and appears as a clear attempt to get away from the need for challenging suspicious events. But making inspection a credible routine, the Soviet Union might be less tempted to argue that the West is simply trying to engage in industrial or military espionage.

The British proposal is nonetheless only a small element in a long negotiation for a chemical weapons ban, with still no end in sight.

Environmentalists greet budget plan with delight

By Rosemary Collins, Agriculture Correspondent

Conservation bodies yesterday greeted with delight the EEC decision to permit agricultural spending to include the protection of environmentally sensitive land, although no central funding will be forthcoming and no criteria have yet been agreed.

"The principle has been won," said Mr Ian Prest of the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds. "The Minister can argue next year in Brussels for CAP funding to underpin the new agreement."

Mr Robin Grove-White of the Council for the Protection of Rural England, said: "This is a significant step forward. Its success will hinge on

reform at the Ministry of Agriculture, which will need a new deputy under the Wildlife and Countryside Act to further conservation."

If Britain uses the freedom won yesterday in Brussels to spend some of its farm budget on conservation, the money will have to come this year from national resources alone.

At last month's meeting of farm ministers, when a draft of the same plan was discussed, it was envisaged that not more than 2 per cent of the countryside, apart from existing national parks, would be set aside as suitable for conservation grants. This figure was dropped from the agreement in principle reached this week by ministers, but budgetary constraints are expected to en-

sure that it is not greatly exceeded.

In a written Commons answer yesterday, Mr Michael Spelling, the Agriculture Minister, described the agreement as "an imaginative development which I have urged on my colleagues for some time."

A ministry spokesman said, however, that it would be "pure speculation" to assume that "poorly drained land, rough grazing, uplands or other wildlife habitats would be designated for future grants, if funding is provided by the Treasury. The conservation organisations are to seek to achieve the target through the use of the junior agriculture Minister responsible for conservation, to discuss



Filippo Pandolfi: a personal triumph

Basque call for peace

Vitoria: For the first time since Basque militants began their bloody separatist campaign, Basque authorities have called on inhabitants of the troubled region to join the fight against violence that has killed 500 since 198.

The autonomous regional government, created under the statute of Guernica in 1979, yesterday issued a proposal that includes the setting up of a commission to study the origin of the violence and a publicity campaign to educate the 2.7 million inhabitants of the northern Basque region on its detrimental effects.

The proposal comes a week after the military wing of the Basque separatist organisation ETA killed the head of the region's independent police force with a car bomb in Vitoria, the capital of the Basque region.

Lieutenant-Colonel Carlos Diaz Arkoitia was the fourth victim of Basque violence this year. Last year, violence claimed the lives of 45 police and military officers as well as ETA militants.

The proposal was prepared by the Government of Mr Jose Antonio Ardanza, the head of the 75-seat regional parliament. The parliament is controlled by the 32 deputies of the century-old Basque Nationalist Party, a combination of political conservatism and staunch regionalism.

Since the Basque area recovered its historic regional rights six years ago, the party has generally placed the responsibility on the Mantin central government for dealing with the problem of ETA violence.

But Mr Ardanza, who recently replaced controversial Mr Carlos Garaikoetxea in a fierce intra-party shuffle, made it clear in yesterday's document that "the fight against violence is the responsibility of everyone in Euzkadi (the Basque name for the region)."

Spain's ruling socialist party has refused to negotiate with ETA until the separatists renounce violence and lay down their arms. — AP

Terror two get life

From our Correspondent

TWO leading members of the terrorist Red Army Faction were sentenced to life imprisonment at Dusseldorf yesterday for their part in the 1977 murder of a leading industrialist.

The court sentenced Adelheid Schmitz, aged 29, a nurse, who was also convicted of the murder of a banker, Jürgen Ponto, to three consecutive life terms. Rolf Clemens Wagner, aged 41, was given a double life term. Wagner is already serving a 15-year sentence passed in Switzerland for the murder of a passer-by during a Zurich bank raid.

Altogether, four Red Army Faction members have now been sentenced for the abduction and killing in 1977 of Hanns-Martin Schleyer, the president of the employers' federation.

Right wingers oppose holocaust Bill

Tension builds up over denials that Nazis killed 6 million Jews

From Anna Tomforde in Bonn

The conservative parties in the centre-right coalition will oppose legislation making it an offence to refute or belittle the murder of six million Jews by the Nazis.

Their opposition to the Bill has caused tension with the Liberals in the government alliance and is certain to embarrass Chancellor Helmut Kohl ahead of the fortieth anniversary of the defeat of Nazi Germany in May.

Dr Kohl's CDU, and its right-wing Bavarian sister party, the CSU, decided late on Tuesday that a new law, drafted by the opposition Social Democrats, would give neo-Nazis "ample opportunity to publicise their absurd views in the courtsrooms." It would also do justice to the memory of the victims of Nazi tyranny. Despite their decision,

the draft law will be discussed in the Bundestag today.

The Social Democrats, who initiated the law under the previous chancellor, Mr Helmut Schmidt, spoke of a "scandal" and a "bad signal ahead of May 8" if the West German Government was seen to shelve the plan for an extended and embarrassing debate.

Jewish leaders have spoken of Bonn's "political and moral duty" to suppress and punish those who repeat what had become known as the "Auschwitz lie," particularly in view of rising neo-Nazi propaganda in connection with the anniversary.

But Mr Alfred Drage, the CDU/CSU's floor leader, who is to the right of the CDU, said yesterday: "We are not prepared to be put under duress to do justice to the memory of the victims of Nazi tyranny. We have set up the world's

most stable democracy, and we know, better than anyone, how to protect it."

Opposition to the law originated in the Bavarian CSU, which said that the legislation would make "beer-table talk a crime." The CDU subsequently took up the same arguments. It demanded that crimes committed against Germans driven from former German territories "as a result of the war should be incorporated in the legislation, a proposal strongly rejected by Jewish leaders and the Judge's Association.

The decision of the CDU/CSU is a severe rebuff for the Liberals in the coalition, whose Justice Minister, Dr Hans Engelhard, has defended the project in view of international pressure, especially from Israel.

His Social Democratic predecessor, Mr Jürgen Schmude, said yesterday: "Ahead of

May 8, and as a result of stubbornness and indifference, West Germany will suffer an embarrassment of international dimensions."

The Nazi hunter, Mr Simon Wiesenthal, said that Germany could have set an example for other European states and the US, in passing the legislation: "now, neo-Nazi agitation would be encouraged."

Reuter adds: Bundestag's military ombudsman yesterday criticised armed forces and intelligence chiefs for treating homosexuals as security risks.

Mr Wilhelm Borkhan said he considered unjustified the military's standard assumption that homosexuals "risked" being blackmailed into spying.

"Why should homosexuals be more liable to become spies than people who, for example, lead a dissipated life in gambling casinos or suchlike?" Mr Borkhan asked.

New action for Goetz

From Jane Rosen in New York

New York law enforcement officials will resubmit the case of Bernhard Goetz, the "subway vigilante," to a Grand Jury next week on the basis of "significant new evidence" involving his shooting of four black teenagers last December.

Goetz was cleared of charges of attempted murder in January because the first Grand Jury believed he had acted in self-defence. Since then there have been charges, especially by black groups, that Manhattan District Attorney, Mr Robert Morgenthau, failed to press hard enough for an indictment.

Under New York state law a district attorney may resubmit a case provided he has evidence that was not available during the first investigation. Mr Morgenthau has declined to make his new evidence public but according to reports a "mystery witness" has come forward with an account of the shooting which differs from Goetz's account.

The second investigation will begin next week. If the Grand Jury finds the new evidence convincing, Goetz could be indicted for attempted murder and his case would then go to a regular jury trial.

Clean-up for Bikini

Washington: — The government has agreed to pay for another cleanup of radioactivity at Bikini Atoll in the Pacific, the site of US nuclear weapons tests, so that the islands' one-time inhabitants can go home again.

The settlement, which was to become formal with a signing ceremony yesterday, does not affect the Bikini islanders' pending suit for \$450 million in damages before the court of claims in Washington. — AP.

Minister is reinstated

From Jeremy Morgan in Buenos Aires

President Raul Alfonsín yesterday appointed the controversial former economy minister as planning secretary in a move which provoked consternation and puzzlement among local creditors.

Bankers were alarmed at the prospect of the irascible Mr Edgardo Grinspun's return to the political sphere less than a month after he had been replaced as economy minister by the then planning secretary, Mr Juan Sourrouille.

Whether Mr Grinspun, whose confrontations with creditors were counted down during the 14-month term, is back to haunt the bankers is not clear, but they have condemned the appointment.

"Ridiculous," one banker said on hearing of Mr Grinspun's intended resurrection a few days ago. "This is not serious. I don't understand what it is they want unless it is to undermine Sourrouille."

President Alfonsín has promised that Mr Grinspun will restrict himself to long-term planning and not interfere with the new economy minister. One of Mr Sourrouille's last actions was to unveil a five-year economic plan (1985 to 1989).

Cancer hope for women

Washington: Women do not have to undergo disfiguring breast removal to survive breast cancer provided the disease is treated in its early stages, according to a study released yesterday.

The study, released at a press conference at the US National Institutes of Health, said that if malignant tumours was no more than four centimetres in size, removing the growth was as effective as taking off the whole breast. — Reuter.

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FROM TAN SWEE TEN TO THE RT. HON. NICHOLAS RIDLEY M.P.

A MESSAGE FROM THE HEART.

The girl in the picture is Tan Swee Ten.

She's not a model. She's a real live Singapore Girl. As a matter of policy, Singapore Airlines use only authentic employees in their advertising.

We say this at the start, because it reveals a business approach, an integrity, which is the cornerstone of Singapore Airlines' case for Manchester services.

The story so far.

The existing Air Services Agreement between the United Kingdom and Singapore does not lay down the number of services to be operated.

It leaves the airlines themselves to decide how many services to provide, in the light of their own commercial judgement. But the British Government has imposed restrictions on us. We are only allowed to operate one service a day into Heathrow.

In February 1983 and again in September 1984, Singapore Airlines applied to start a new route to Manchester. The Department of Transport agreed to this, but only on condition that SIA's services to Heathrow were reduced.

The British Government knows, just as other airlines know, that anything less than a daily service on this increasingly popular route will not make commercial sense. So the Government's response is tantamount to a 'No' to Manchester.

Why has the Government said 'No'?

1. Does it think there is insufficient traffic to justify extra services?

Since 1976, when daily frequencies with B747s began, passenger traffic has grown from 173,000 to over 300,000 - up 73%. In the same period cargo has grown 145%. Yet there has been no increase in either BA's or SIA's services during this period.

2. Could it be that it doubts our commercial judgement? Is it worried that we will lose money?

Our track record speaks for itself. Furthermore, Mr Spicer, the Aviation Minister, has said recently that airlines should be encouraged to back their own commercial judgement. This is precisely what we want to do.

3. Does the Government think SIA has an unfair advantage?

SIA has never received a single dollar in subsidy. This has been acknowledged in Parliament by Mr Spicer himself.

4. Does the Government want to protect British Airways?



Lord King himself has always said that BA welcomes competition. We ourselves would be happy for a British airline to compete with us on the route.

Is it commercially viable to serve Manchester?

1. Manchester is an International Gateway Airport. It serves 20 million people in an area that supports 60% of the UK's manufacturing industry.

2. Manchester Airport Authority estimates that in the first year there would be 19,000 outbound passengers to Singapore, and a further 19,000 going beyond. There would be considerable inbound traffic as well.

3. SIA does not start new services unless it is totally satisfied that they are commercially viable.

4. That is why the company has made a profit in every single year since it started in 1972. It is now one of the world's largest international airlines, although it comes from a country the size of the Isle of Wight.

How does this fit in with the Government's position?

The recent white paper on Airline Competition Policy declared the barriers to new services and airlines who can provide a safe and reliable service should be low... Only competition will ensure the flow of innovative ideas, and new management and marketing methods.

Surely, what we are doing is exactly what Mrs Thatcher would applaud.

Manchester is keen to welcome us.

Britain is Singapore's largest trading partner in Europe. For all the benefits of international trade, increased employment and tourism, the Manchester Airport Authority is keen to welcome us. And certainly it would ease congestion at Heathrow.

People in the North will also appreciate the gentle grace and style of the Singapore Girls who have given us the kind of inflight service that even other airlines talk about.

For all of these reasons, Tan Swee Ten politely and respectfully asks Mr Nicholas Ridley to change his mind.



Tehran charges Baghdad with using chemical weapons again

Gulf fighting rages as Iranians aim for Tigris

From David Hirst in Kuwait

Heavy fighting raged throughout yesterday in the marshes of southern Iraq, where the Iranian army and Revolutionary Guards have launched their boldest offensive in the Gulf war for a year.

The outcome of the offensive, apparently aimed at seizing the main Basra-Baghdad highway, remains unclear, with the Iraqis claiming that they have pushed the attackers back, and the Iranians maintaining that with all Iraqi counter-offensives having failed, they are consolidating their new front lines.

As in the February 1984 offensive in the same area, the Iraqis have accused the Iranians of using chemical weapons. There was no immediate comment from Baghdad on these charges.

The Iranian deputy foreign minister, Mr. Hossein Ardehali, said that Iran had asked the UN Secretary-General, Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, yesterday to stop Iraq using such weapons. He made clear Iran would feel free to use chemical weapons if there were no response.

Iran also announced plans to resume shelling the southern

Iraqi port of Basra and threatened to launch missile attacks on Baghdad and other Iraqi cities unless Iraq stopped attacking Iranian civilian centres.

Earlier in the day, Iraqi jets attacked Isfahan, a former royal Persian capital 250 miles from the Iran-Iraq border, and the western city of Bakhtiari, where a raid three days ago killed 110 people and wounded over 1,000, the national news agency said.

The Iranian offensive began on Monday night. The attackers advanced across the Hawizah marshes that separate the river Tigris and the main highway from the international frontier.

Last year the Iraqis actually reached the highway but were driven off—apparently with the help of gas. Reports from Baghdad suggest that like last time the Iranian target is the strategic road junction at Al-Qurrah, north of Basra at the confluence of the Tigris and the Euphrates.

In early communiques, Iraq claimed to have repulsed the offensive, but late on Tuesday, Baghdad conceded that the Iraqis had indeed advanced some 10 miles to the western edges of the marshes near the highway.

Mubarak condemns 'defeatism' in US

Washington: President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt said yesterday that those who wanted the US to hold back from Middle East peace efforts were advocating "almost a defeatist approach."

Mr Mubarak criticised the view that the parties to the Arab-Israeli conflict had sole responsibility for moving the peace process forward with the US playing only a secondary role.

He declared that Jordan and the PLO had made a firm

commitment to a peaceful solution of the conflict that would lead to direct negotiations with Israel.

Mr Mubarak was speaking on the final day of his visit to Washington, during which his proposal for a more active US role was received coolly by officials.

But he told the National Press Club that supporters of the view that the US should wait and see how things developed in the Middle East were advocating inaction.—Reuters.



Shi'ite women march in a Beirut funeral procession, carrying portraits of relatives killed by Israeli troops in the southern village of Zrariye this week in retaliation for an attack on patrols into territory under Lebanese Army control

Jerusalem plans to speed up withdrawal

Timing will not be influenced by Shi'ite resistance, Knesset told

From Ian Black in Jerusalem

The Israeli army will execute the second stage of its three-phase withdrawal from southern Lebanon "in the shortest possible time," but will neither be dictated to by Shi'ite resistance, nor end the controversial "iron fist" policy the Defence Minister, Mr. Yitzhak Rabin, said yesterday.

Mr Rabin told the Knesset that Israel had no choice but to come to grips with "Shi'ite terrorism" and defend its troops "in any way we see fit... until the last soldier leaves Lebanese soil."

Mr Rabin's statement followed the death of 12 Israeli servicemen in a suicide car-bomb attack just north of the border on Sunday, and Monday's Israeli raid on the Lebanese village of Zrariye, in which 34 men described here as "terrorists" were killed. Two more Israeli soldiers were killed on Tuesday, bringing to

637 the number of deaths since the war started in June, 1982.

Israeli aeroplanes yesterday attacked a base belonging to the Syrian-supported al-Saiqa Palestinian guerrilla organisation near Bar Elias, just south of the road from Beirut to Damascus. Military sources said that the raid was part of a continuing policy.

Mr Rabin said the time required to execute the second stage of the troop withdrawal had been determined by "logistical considerations which take into account the Syrian problem we face."

He was apparently referring to the listening post and early-warning station on Jebel Baraq, which is in the next area due for evacuation. Mr Rabin did not give a date for the completion of the three-stage process, but he has said previously that he hopes it will be over by the middle of September.

Military sources were quoted as saying yesterday that the

return to the international border could be completed earlier than planned once the political decision to do so had been taken.

"Should terrorism continue," Mr Rabin said, "we shall have to react with great force, using all the means at our disposal."

The Israeli Defence Forces will defend its troops until the last soldier leaves Lebanese soil. We will do this in any way we see fit. We will maintain the IDF's norms of ethical combat even under these difficult circumstances.

The Prime Minister, Mr. Shimon Peres, said yesterday that he believed that the army was moving as quickly as it could "and I also think we must be careful not to create an unnecessary atmosphere of panic."

Mr Rabin's statement in parliament was followed by an often angry debate, with one Likud MP accusing the left of being "collaborators" with the

NEWS IN BRIEF

Mugabe to deport Britons

THE Zimbabwe Government plans to deport two South African exiles with British passports to Britain today, according to diplomats in Harare, Andrew Meldrum writes. Dave Hemson and Darcy Dutoit were arrested last week with five black Zimbabweans for what the government suspected was subversive activity with the trade union movement.

Rock deal

ABORIGINES will regain ownership of Ayers Rock, one of their most sacred sites and Australia's greatest tourist attraction, in an agreement reached yesterday with the Aboriginal Affairs Minister, Mr. Clyde Holding. Under the deal, the government will have a 99 year lease on the rock and the Aborigines will receive \$75,000 plus a fifth of the income from visitor's fees.—Reuters.

Prisoners shot

GUARDS shot and killed 11 inmates yesterday who tried to break out of prison in the south-eastern Brazilian city of Sorocaba. "The guards acted in legitimate self-defence," a police spokesman said. He said the prisoners had crawled through a tunnel only to find themselves facing four police guards.—AP.

Forest damage

HALF of West Germany's 17.3 million acres of forest is now damaged by pollution, a government report said yesterday. The main part of the blame lay with air pollutants and their byproducts. Damage to the forests, which cover a quarter of West German territory, continued to increase last year.—Reuters.

SA arrests

NEARLY 100,000 blacks were arrested in 1984 on charges of being in white areas of South Africa illegally, the government announced in Cape Town. The total number of pass law arrests was down from about 200,000 in 1983, when the arrest figure was the highest for several years.—AP.

Kaunda defeated

FOR the first time in memory, the parliament in the one-party state of Zambia defeated a government bill yesterday granting a 50,000-acre farm to two foreigners. President Kenneth Kaunda (above) had personally endorsed the bill to give the farm to a Briton, Mr. A. C. Williams, and a Kenyan, Mr. Francis Mbulu. The men said they planned to invest millions of dollars in the farm.

Battle lost

DESPITE vehement objections by some feminist groups, the Italian Interior Minister, Mr. Oscar Luigi Scalfaro, has ruled that married women must use their husband's family name on identity cards and passports.—AP.

Mountain deaths

THE Austrian Alps claimed 265 lives in mountaineering and skiing accidents last year, 40 more than in 1983, the Mountain Police said in Vienna yesterday. The police also rescued 1,507 people from the mountains in 1984.—Reuters.

Czech arrests

CZECHOSLOVAK police detained 48 people in a raid on a private home in Prague last Monday and were still holding 11, including two Charter 77 officials, on charges of subversion.—Reuters.

Hunger strike

A BRITON, Alan Revo, who is serving a 15-year prison sentence in Holland for the murder of a Dutch policeman, is waging a hunger strike to protest against his maximum security detention after an escape attempt. The Dutch Justice Ministry confirmed yesterday.—AP.

Bootleg deaths

THE death toll rose to at least 26 yesterday in an illicit liquor tragedy in India's western Gujarat state, described as one of the worst in recent times. About 67 people were admitted to hospital in Ahmedabad.—AP.

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OVERSEAS NEWS

THE GUARDIAN Thursday March 14 1985 9

SA big business reaffirms its commitment to reform

Botha claims UN decision is threat to progress

From Patrick Laurence in Johannesburg

The Foreign Minister, Mr. P. W. Botha, yesterday warned South Africans not to underestimate the implications of the unanimous vote by the UN Security Council condemning the South African Government for the death of 13 people at the Crossroads squatter camp, and for the arrest on charges of treason of 16 senior members of the United Democratic Front.

Mr. Botha expressed disappointment that Britain and the US had voted for the resolution, saying it meant that they were allowing themselves to be pressured into supporting the "revolutionary aims" of the militant majorities of the UN.

He noted, however, that representatives of both countries had expressed reservations about the resolution and warned that the UN should not anticipate judgment in the impending treason trial of the United Democratic Front leaders.

While the UN resolution and the threatened disinvestment

campaign could hit South Africans of all races hard, South Africa's neighbours would suffer even more severely, he said.

"The progress of the whole of southern Africa is threatened," Mr. Botha said.

"For all the countries of southern Africa it has now become the highest priority to tackle this threat jointly. If we do not, each of us will pay dearly."

Meanwhile big business yesterday strongly reaffirmed its commitment to reform and offered to put its shoulder to the wheel to help President P. W. Botha to "give visible expression" to his reformist intentions.

Organised business made its belief for the need in urgent reform manifest a joint statement by six major employer bodies and in forthright speeches by top businessmen at the annual meeting of the South African Foundation.

Both developments came in the wake of the UN resolution and were clearly in response to growing world pressure for change in South Africa.

US ties Pakistani missile supplies to border violations

From Alex Brodie in Islamabad

The US is to provide Pakistan with sophisticated air-to-air missiles to combat border violations by Afghanistan, a senior visiting State Department official, said yesterday.

The Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs, Mr. Michael Armacost, said that Congress had been asked to approve the supply of AIM-9L missiles for Pakistan's American-supplied F-16 fighters.

"We are concerned by the number of intrusions into Pakistani airspace," he said.

Kabul has repeatedly denied responsibility for border violations.

"All aspect" missiles used throughout the US air force, are a big improvement on the heat-seeking missiles now fitted to Pakistan's F-16s.

Pakistan and Afghanistan regularly accuse each other of violating their ill-defined border and there have been considerable fighting in recent months.

Observers doubt that Pakistan will suddenly start trying to shoot MIGs down along the border—any propaganda value would be lost unless the plane is shot down inside Pakistan.

They feel that Pakistan wants the missiles to deter Kabul from making punitive raids deeper inside Pakistan. Kabul has regularly warned about the consequences of allowing the guerrillas free passage in and out of Pakistan.

Asked whether a reported heavy increase in covert US

aid to the guerrillas would not increase tension and pressure on Pakistan, Mr. Armacost said: "If we were supplying covert aid I would not confirm it. If we weren't we would not comment."

Any increasing tension was the responsibility of the Soviet Union for invading Afghanistan in the first place, he said.

The new missiles, if approved by Congress and no one here expects any problems, will not please Pakistan's other neighbour, India.

"As we have stated in the past, the introduction of sophisticated arms into Pakistan leads to an arms race in the subcontinent," said a senior Indian diplomat.

Weapons supplied to Pakistan in the name of combating Communism always ended up being sold to India, he added.

"The supply of such arms to Pakistan is a source of peaceful cooperation in the subcontinent," said a senior Indian diplomat.

Mr. Armacost, who is travelling on to India, said that he was impressed by Pakistan's determination to improve relations with India which are at a low point since the Punjab crisis last year. The Pakistanis are mediating in Indian affairs which Pakistan denied.

Washington wanted to improve relations with Delhi, he said, but would never contemplate doing so at the expense of the Pakistani relationship now with the Government of Pakistan which is trouble free," Mr. Armacost said.

Sikh No to peace talks

New Delhi: A fired Sikh political leader, Harbhajan Singh Longowal, said in an interview published yesterday that Punjab peace talks with the Government would not be resumed unless his party's five demands were accepted.

In the interview with The Tribune newspaper, Mr. Longowal called for an inquiry into anti-Sikh riots triggered by the murder of Mrs. Gandhi.

Two days ago Indian authorities lifted detention orders on Mr. Longowal, president of the Sikhs' Akali Dal party, and seven other Sikh leaders in a move widely seen as the first step by the Prime Minister, Mr. Rajiv Gandhi, to end the Punjab crisis.

The eight were arrested shortly after troops stormed the Sikhs' holiest shrine, Amritsar's Golden Temple, in June.

The northern border state of Punjab has been affected by a militant campaign for more greater autonomy for more than two years. Talks between the Government and the Akali Dal aimed at finding a solution broke down in February last year.

Mr. Longowal said in the interview after his release that the demands included full compensation for victims of the riots and the arrest of all those involved in the anti-Sikh violence.

Police have arrested another Indian on suspicion of spying, the 18th to be held in connection with the espionage connection with the Sharnas, who was arrested in a Delhi court yesterday and was remanded in judicial custody for seven days—Reuters.

Link-up with Thais

SURIN: Kampuchean guerrilla leaders said yesterday that they planned to launch coordinated attacks with Thai forces on either side of the Thai-Kampuchean border to drive out Vietnamese troops from Thailand.

Sihanoukian National Army (ANS) leaders said at a meeting in the north-eastern border town that a joint strategy was being mapped out to attack the Vietnamese on both sides of the frontier, possibly in the next few days.

That army spokesman had no comment on the guerrillas' statements.

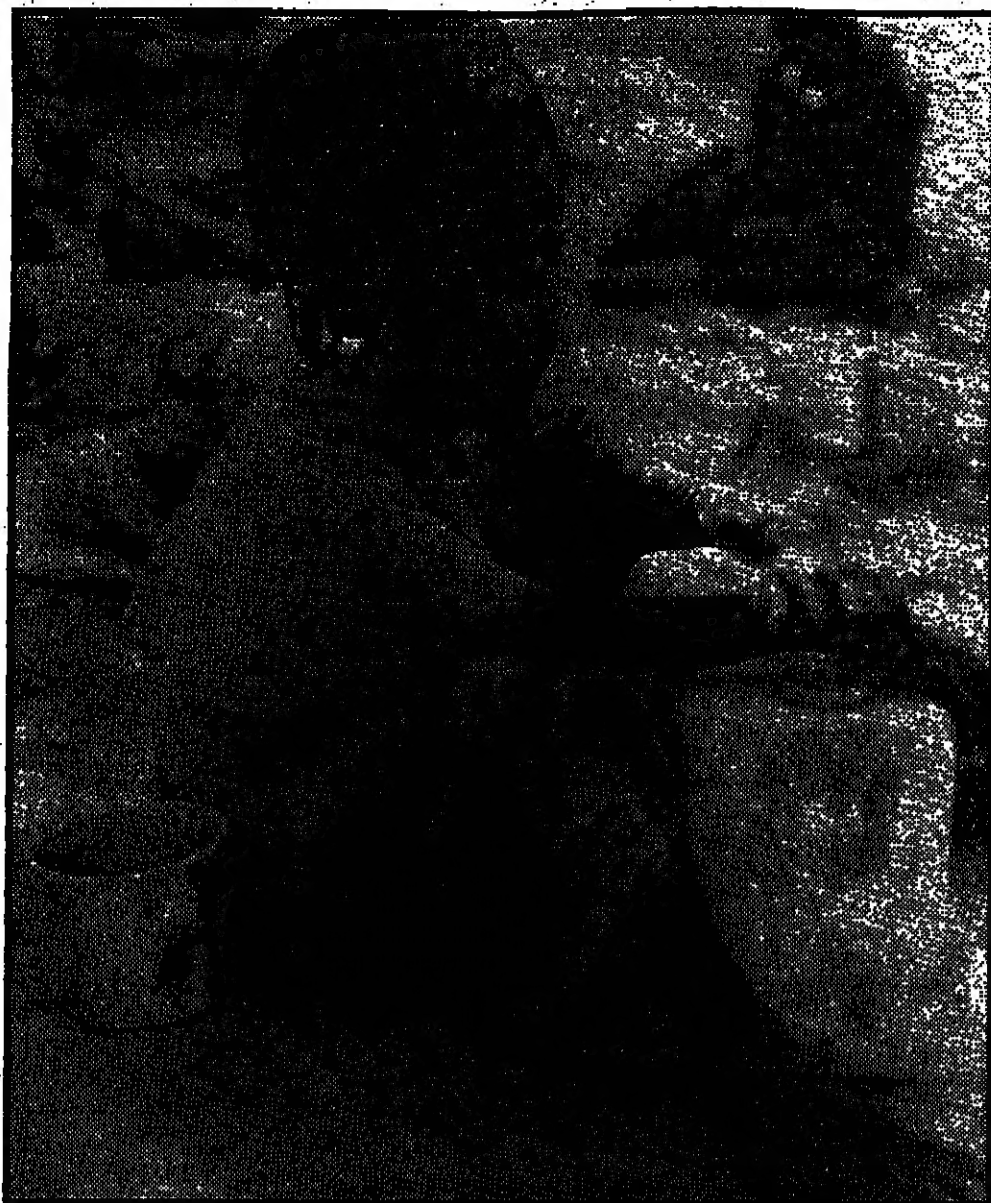
The ANS leaders said there had been considerable fighting in the area since Vietnamese forces captured their Green Hill base on Monday.

Thailand said that 100 Vietnamese troops had crossed into Thai territory to attack Green Hill, also known as Tatum, from the rear. An army spokesman in Bangkok, however, said most of the Vietnamese troops were believed to have pulled back to Kampuchea.

The Vietnamese, backing the Heng Samrin government in Phnom Penh, launched a dry-season offensive against the guerrilla coalition last November and have now captured all its major border bases.

Prince Norodom Sihanouk, leader of the ANS and head of the three-faction Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea, told a press conference at Surin yesterday that the guerrillas would be able to fight indefinitely because of China's aid.

China's Foreign Minister, Qiao Qunli, said in a Bangkok news conference that support for the guerrillas—Reuters.



Face of famine: a Tigréan refugee child waits in a camp near Kessala, Sudan

Ethiopia reassures aid donors that relief is reaching the war zone

From Iain Guest in Geneva

The Ethiopian commissioner for Relief and Rehabilitation, Mr. Dawit Wolde-Giorgis, assured a meeting of Ethiopia's aid donors here yesterday that Addis Ababa is feeding famine victims in the northern war zone, even though the food situation is "critical" in Tigré and Wollo.

Mr. Dawit's remarks were made in a private meeting with governments and private organisations after an emergency United Nations meeting on Africa which finished here on Tuesday night.

According to participants, Mr. Dawit said that the Ethiopian Government had established and adequate system of feeding centres and transport in the province of Eritrea, but that the food situation was deteriorating in Tigré and Wollo. A total of eight million Europeans still needed emergency food aid from outside the country.

According to the latest figures from the world food programme, Ethiopia still requires 550,000 tons of food aid to the end of this year, even taking into account pledged made at the UN meeting.

Mr. Dawit's comments followed a sharp exchange of views here on Monday between Vice-President George Bush and the Ethiopian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Goshu Wolde.

Mr. Bush said that 2.5 million Ethiopians in the north are going without relief aid.

Mr. Wolde insisted that food was reaching all but a "tiny" number of famine victims living in inaccessible regions. He also described the British agency, War on Want, which is working in Tigré, as a "war

ISRAELI yesterday offered to share its expertise in growing food in the desert with African countries suffering from severe drought. Mr. David Kimche, director of the Israeli Foreign Ministry, said yesterday in Geneva that Israel had much expertise in exploiting ground water to nourish agricultural production in arid conditions, and was prepared to discuss drought problems with any country.—Reuters.

on Ethiopia organisation, helping bandits and terrorists". Observers here agree that it is almost impossible to say with certainty how many Ethiopians are indeed going without food. The International Committee of the Red Cross is discreetly delivering food to about 50,000 people in Ethiopia from the Sudan. At the same time, the Red Cross is feeding 350,000 people in

Wollo, Tigré, and Eritrea from Addis Ababa.

But the Red Cross is still only distributing 5,000 tons of food a month. In addition, the feeding programme has been hampered by the Eritrean People's Liberation Front.

Red Cross officials here warn that the situation in northern Ethiopia will deteriorate, and the agency is trying to double the programme.

According to Red Cross estimates, 1.5 million Tigréans are living in areas where there has been no harvest. Another 4.5 million are in regions where harvest has been a third of the average.

The latest revised aid target for 20 African countries was \$1.7 billion, of which two-thirds would cover food.

● Hundreds of tons of Common Market food aid to Africa is being hijacked and sold off by Ethiopian soldiers, it was claimed yesterday.

A Tory MP, back from 10 days living with Eritrean guerrillas, said he saw sacks of EEC supplies intended for famine relief stored in mud huts in a border village in the heart of the war zone.

Mr. Paul Howell, MEP for Norfolk, said the supplies came from opportunistic Sudanese traders—who said they bought them from the soldiers. The food was being sold in the market place to anyone who could afford it.

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DS/284

IN EVERY way Claudio Abbado confounds conventional ideas of the conductor as egocentric. Even in the heat of rehearsal he rarely raises his voice, yet his very career tells of a dynamo hidden behind the calm expression.

For years now he has divided his time between a unique group of the world's top music organisations—the London Symphony Orchestra (of which he has been principal conductor since 1979 and latterly music director), the Chicago Symphony Orchestra (of which he is principal guest conductor), La Scala Milan and the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra. In 18 months he expands his Viennese connection to become director of the Vienna State Opera.

Such a combination speaks of an almost unrivalled ability to pick and choose, yet abrasiveness plays little or no part in his success. In conversation he is rarely provocative. Even in criticising the London musical scene he makes sure he is being constructive: "There are so many concerts here," he says, "but with no musical line between them."

That is what he intends to modify over the next few months in his latest brainchild, the massive series, Mahler, Vienna and the 20th Century.

In two intensive periods between now and October this festival of 21 concerts will present all nine of the Mahler symphonies as well as the song-cycles.

The difference between this and other Mahler cycles is that the programmes around the Mahler landmarks are all designed to show how radically he pointed forward, directly to the Second Viennese School of Schoenberg, Berg and Webern and then by another bridge of association to the modern movement of Boulez, Berio and Ligeti as well as Birtwistle and Ferynhough in this country.

Most of the concerts—starting with tonight's programme at the Barbican—will have Abbado and the LSO, Sir Colin Davis will be conducting Mahler's Eighth Symphony, the Symphony of a Thousand (a



Claudio Abbado: linking Mahler (below) with the generations that followed. Picture by Allan Titmuss

Claudio Abbado talks to Edward Greenfield about the massive new concert series he hopes will give a broader vision of the Viennese genius

Mahler and a quiet maestro

work which Abbado has yet to get into his repertoire) at the Albert Hall on April 21, while on June 9 at the Barbican as a postscript to the first part of the Festival Leonard Bernstein will be giving Mahler's Ninth with the visiting Concertgebouw Orchestra. Pierre Boulez conducts the LSO in Das Lied von der Erde on October 10.

The London Sinfonietta is taking part, too, conducted by Diego Masson, Simon Rattle and Elgar Howarth, while recitals in the series will be given by Jessye Norman, Maurizio Pollini and the piano duo of Bruno Canino and Antonio Ballista (lunchtime at the Barbican on March 26), who will also be the soloists two days later for Berio's Double Concerto, in the lyricism of Schubert he

detects an inner sadness, such as appears again in Mahler and the Austrian world of Des Knaben Wunderhorn.

Vienna, as Abbado sees it, may be the city of the waltz, but behind that is sadness. Mahler's own neurosis is part of it, and one reason Mahler's music today so appeals to young audiences is that it reflects inner problems: "They see some aspect of life and death in it," says Abbado.

The inclusion of Bernstein in the present series, as different as could be from Abbado both in his flamboyance as a conductor and as a Mahler interpreter, reflects Abbado's experience after winning the Mitropoulos prize in New York in 1963.

His five-month attachment to the New York Philharmonic coincided with a period when Bernstein was regularly conducting Mahler. The experience served Abbado well when two years later he conducted his first Mahler symphony, the Resurrection Symphony, No 2 in his debut at the Salzburg Festival with the Vienna Philharmonic.

Those associations have continued ever since. He has yet to miss a year at the Salzburg Festival (this summer with the LSO instead of the Vienna Philharmonic) and his long association with the Vienna Philharmonic led to his appointment after the departure of Lorin Maazel from the Vienna State Opera after Lorin Maazel's sudden departure.

"Everyone in Italy," Abbado says, "knows better than the manager the best choice for the local football team. Similarly in Vienna everybody knows the best cast for the Ring cycle. Everyone thinks he is director of the Opera, but I just want to love music."

Whether or not he manages to keep clear of provincial Viennese intrigues after he takes up his post in the autumn of next year remains to be seen.

He will then spend some six months of the year in Vienna, and partly compensate by cutting his Chicago stint from six weeks to two. Before that he hopes to take a six-month sabbatical from conducting, studying the new scores he needs.

Cecil Parkinson? That's a good question. Peter Walker wouldn't, Norman Tebbit couldn't, Cecil had been in industry, after all, they said, knew a bit about these matters, close to government without being in it, and getting closer. But you did wonder who had arranged the fan of cards from which Parkinson was, as conjurers always say, selected. And when Cecil made so little distinction between "we" and "the Government," and was introduced as one of Thatcher's closest advisers on industry, it did begin to look as though the exile had come home.

It might be cheering to be able to report a convergence of minds, but there wasn't even agreement about whether Maerdy was under threat or not. There was a great deal of politeness on both sides as we went over the deeply trodden ground: where is the future for our children? Yes, but there may be other futures than the pits. And afterwards, did Doris Williams think Parkinson had understood? "Deep down I think he did, being a family man, and knowing what a family means to us."

She said it without the slightest overtone, or the slightest malice.

His commitments at La Scala, Milan, however, sound daunting. They include a new production of Bizet's Carmen with Shirley Verrett and Plácido Domingo, a new production of Verdi's Macbeth with Giorgio Strehler, Rossini's Viaggio a Reims (recently re-discovered and given its modern premiere by Abbado in Pesaro) and Nono's new opera, Prometeus, first presented at the Venice Biennale.

On top of that he has planned a comprehensive Debussy Festival to provide a climax to his career at La Scala, where his concert-giving over the years has been almost as important as his opera-conducting. Pollés et Méduses will be given in a production by Patrice Chéreau, and besides the complete orchestral and chamber music, including some newly discovered works, the programmes also promise Sviatoslav Richter and Maurizio Pollini doing the piano music.

If in his unforced, seemingly gentle approach to his work Abbado finds a model among the great conductors of the past, it is Wilhelm Furtwängler. As the son of an eminent violinist and teacher at the Milan conservatory, Abbado in his youth had access to rehearsals at La Scala. Of Toscanini he reports that "he was not nice to the orchestra, very cold and tyrannical, shouting a lot. Furtwängler, on the other hand, was not tyrannical at all when he came to La Scala."

If Furtwängler wanted to correct something, Abbado remembers, he would simply say: "No, our more," and leave it at that. "He didn't speak much at all, but the end result was miraculous. For me he was the greatest of all."

There speaks a conductor who is not so much a talker, who decided on his vocation at the age of seven after being taken to a concert at La Scala. What impressed him above all was Debussy's Petes, the second of the Nocturnes. Years later they discovered in the lad's diary an important entry: "One day I will conduct," a characteristically quiet but determined decision.

Robin Denselow on the new rock releases

Billy rebel

IT'S BEEN yet another hyper-active, yet another week for Billy Bragg. On Saturday he was at London University, along with Elvis Costello and a body of men who still called themselves the South Wales Striking Miners Choir, for one of the last, but surely most rousing, benefits of the whole dispute.

Costello was on scorching form, with five brand new songs and an impassioned version of Stand Down Margaret, while Bragg matched the mood with a new song, Days Like These, finished only that afternoon, dealing with phone-tapping, the Belgrano, and concluding that "wearing badges is not enough."

Two nights later he was up at Cambridge, for CND, before starting his tour promoting the Labour Party's Jobs For Youth campaign, with Labour MPs present at every show. Tonight's musical/political event is in Liverpool with Eric Hoffer.

There's also a new Billy Bragg EP, which is already following Kirsty MacColl's version of his A New England into the best-sellers, but predictably—far more political. Between the Wars (Go Ding) promises to be the over-the-hill of the year in which Bragg comes on like a blend of Pete Seeger and Joe Strummer, with dating folk-style with his jagged electric guitar work.

The two folk songs are Leonard Rose's World Turned Upside Down, the story of those early communists, the Diggers of the 17th century, and Which Side Are You On, a Kentucky miners' song from the Forties, with its quaintly relevant lyrics about pickets "stopped by police at the county line."

There are also two Bragg songs, a slow and more angry version of his anti-Fleet Street It Says Here, and a pretty, poignant ballad, Between the Wars. The latter is a minor classic, a moving and remarkably mature comparison between the Thirties and now, a plea for "sweet moderation" and a living wage, edged around with threats of war.

Mick Jagger: She's The Boss (CBS). Perhaps as a reaction to the controversy, politics, but none of commercial Stones single Undercover Of The Night, Jagger moves to the safer and more lucrative area of fun, relationships and sexual politics for his first-ever solo album. The backing of New York funksters Bernard Edwards, Nile Rodgers and Bill Laswell (the last two also produced the album), to Jamaican rhythm kings Sly and Robbie, jazz-funkster Herbie Hancock and British guitar heroes Jeff Beck and Pete Townshend, and they all end up sounding like a smoothed-over American heavy funk outfit.

The songs range from the tunefully throwaway to the witty and mildly outrageous, with Jagger singing energetically against rather than more controlled backing than he often gets from the Stones. It's a pleasant, if never wildly adventurous selection, recommended for the driving rhythm work on Running Out Of Luck, the highly amusing and enthusiastically performed title track, antidote to Under My Thumb, but not for the ballad on which he's backed by strings.

Run-DMC (Profile). Joseph Simmons, better known as Run, and Darryl McDaniels, better known as D.M.C., seem to have been treated as instant celebrities this week. From the moment they got off the plane from New York, the trick is simple: add a really heavy rock backing, compete with wailing guitars, to the usual rap and electro-percussion mix (with only a few scratch effects) and concentrate on bragging rather than social comment in the lyrics.

John Hiatt: Warming Up To The Ice Age (Geffin). Still, best-known for his work with Ry Cooder, Hiatt is like a classic American version of a pub rock singer who can mix stirring rock songs, best ballads and white soul. He ought to be rather more than a cult hero, but he has never made many records, even with Nick Lowe producing half of his last, superb set, Riding With The King. The new album is not quite up to that standard, but it has got Elvis Costello, helping out on one track, and does contain a typical Hiatt mixture of light, dry and finger-snapping songs like She Said The Same Things To Me.

Big Daddy (Making Waves). A novelty act with vocal skills that almost the Flying Pickets, Big Daddy reinterpret a whole series of recent hits and rock standards as if they'd been written in the late fifties and early sixties close-harmony era. Their best treatment, Dancing In The Dark, mysteriously appears only on their EP, not on their album, but the LP does include Barry Manilow's ghostly I Write The Songs, given At The Hop treatment, a version of the Eagles' Hotel California Di Shanon-style, and a wonderful close-harmony, slow version of the awful heavy rock hit Eye Of The Tiger. Like most novelty records, this is good for two listenings or for parties.

Wit's end Wogan

Hugh Hebert on last night's television

AS a description of television "live" is always strictly relative, not to say loaded, I mean there's sport, and the Iranian Embassy siege, and then there's Wogan (BBC-1).

"Will someone answer that phone?" himself yelled to an offstage helper: "One of the benefits of a live show! Probably Bill Cotton wanting us off the air!" In that one little exchange, you may think, lies all the wit of Wogan. You want oiled reflexes, easy sliding manner, the self-deprecation of the cocksure? By the bucket. Add six guests and a studio audience that has clearly

been persuaded it is auditioning for The Price Is Right, and you're away, forty minutes of chat; three nights a week.

The annoying thing about Wogan is not that he is popular — though just how popular with this amount of exposure and this total lack of new ideas is not yet clear — but that when he first started his chat show on television a year or two back, he looked better than this.

We can dismiss "live" for the moment as simply a device for keeping the adrenalin in Wogan's bloodstream. In the past two or three

shows you could count topical references practically on your thumbs. One mention of Chernobyl's death, one of the football draw, any other takers? And on to stage centre troops a hackneyed line up of authors puffing books, actors hyping series, the whole gamut of showbiz personalities that we were promised we would not get. There are exceptions — last night an astronomer — but not enough.

But when he first threw away the clipboard and chose to live on his wits in front of the cameras there did seem just a bit of edge, a slight inclination to probe beyond the memorised questions one to three. With about five minutes for each interview these days, question four is way out of reach.

Brass Tacks (BBC-2) followed up one of its earlier films about the Rhonda, where the miners and their families have been struggling to save the last pit in the valley that once had more than 80 Maerdy has figured in an awful lot of documentary footage before, during, and at the end of the strike. This time they brought Doris Williams, stalwart of the Maerdy women, up to London with her family to talk about the future of the valley with Cecil Parkinson.

It might be cheering to be able to report a convergence of minds, but there wasn't even agreement about whether Maerdy was under threat or not. There was a great deal of politeness on both sides as we went over the deeply trodden ground: where is the future for our children? Yes, but there may be other futures than the pits. And afterwards, did Doris Williams think Parkinson had understood? "Deep down I think he did, being a family man, and knowing what a family means to us."

She said it without the slightest overtone, or the slightest malice.

PLYMOUTH

John Dalton

Allcoat/Steadman

IN the last ten years or so Paul Allcoat has exhibited twice in Exeter now he has his first big show at the City Art Gallery, Plymouth. At first sight his abstract canvases seem too dark and forbidding — there is one he did after a visit to the Berlin Wall — but his main theme is to convey the wonder of space and questions where we come from, the dark and returning to it, fit into the universe, feelings of mystery when we are confronted by unlit alleys, the glow in the night sky or the interior of Chartres Cathedral.

His long horizontal works, 2 ft by 14 ft often in triptych or multiple form, are rich and soothing variations in blue-black, warm brown-black, purple-black to which the eye slowly adjusts as it must to say, a Rothko or Reinhardt. His surfaces are colour-fields immaculately brushed, delicately stained or textured slightly which invite us to search for hints of where we are and what we are looking at in cities at night when our perception is reduced, minimal.

Sensibly he displays a useful set of pages from this notebook which bring together apparently disparate ideas to point us in the right direction — a line from Walter De la Mare "on the starless verge of the dark"; Einstein on matter "there is no place in this new kind of physics for both the field and matter, for the field is the only reality"; insights from Zen philosophy and Japanese aesthetics and an insurmountable passage from Not I by Samuel Beckett but secretly he knows a lot about proportion and Vermeer, that exquisite master of silence and the bare wall.

After the stillness take a cool look at the Newlyn Society exhibition next door where every variety of contemporary style and technique jostles for attention and elbows the eye a bit. Artists, sculptors and potters, some of national and even international standing, are on the rampage with fine drawings by Ken Symonds and W. Barnes-Graham, eye-catching reliefs by Roy Walker, a landscape by

Margo Mackeberghe, abstract watercolours by Marjorie Holland and a powerful acrylic collage by Roy Ray.

The great days of Newlyn may be over but don't miss Alamyholme Farm, Newlyn Fishmarket, and Penzance under attack from the Atlantic. More subtle forms of savage attack and fun may be seen at the Plymouth Arts Centre where Ralph Steadman has a retrospective: 25 years of political cartoons. A different kind of art — he draws blood. Cavalier stuff.

City Art Gallery: Paul Allcoat and Newlyn Society of Artists. Both to April 13. Central Centre: Ralph Steadman. Retrospective to April 6.

MANCHESTER/RADIO 3

Gerald Larner

Leppard/BBC Philharmonic

RAYMOND Leppard conducted a surprisingly hammy performance of Elgar's Introduction and Allegro at the beginning of his concert with the BBC Philharmonic. The first statement of the Welsh folk tune for example, was so slow that the solo viola could scarcely articulate it, and the music seemed to be sliding away in the big climaxes.

However, in a programme ending with Walton's first symphony where the conductor has to heave such great blocks of masonry around, excesses like that are comparatively unremarkable. Leppard was particularly successful in his structural labours in the last movement of the symphony, building up a huge cumulation of rhetoric and, in the best show biz manner giving the impression that every weight he lifted was heavier than the last.

As well as weight, moreover, there was rhythmic tension, which he sustained throughout the work, and a remarkable multi-layered clarity which failed only where the violins were blown out of the texture at the most plethoric moment in the first movement (listeners to BBC Radio 3 might with any luck have heard a different kind of balance at this point).

Between the Elgar and the Walton Ida Haendel appeared as soloist in Britten's violin concerto. It was a brilliant performance of the particularly difficult original version of the score—but not, because



Maurice Sumray's *The Apple Gatherers* (detail) at the City Gallery, Plymouth

of that, a mere display of tactical prowess without any understanding of the emotional issues. Here playing penetrated further and further towards the meaning of the piece as it went on, from a somewhat disorientated beginning to a searching and moving examination of the sadness of the finale.

HUDDERSFIELD

Robin Thornber

Phoenix

DAVID Storey's "new" play was in fact written about five years ago and staged last year by the amateur Ealing Questions. The first professional production by Century Theatre runs for a week in Huddersfield and a week in Rotherham. There was a time when new plays by David Storey went straight from the Royal Court to the West End.

The central character is the burnt-out artistic director of a northern repertory theatre which is about to be

demolished by its civic sponsors. A collier's son and former boxer, he returned to his home town of mines and mills seven years ago to bring art to the people, who didn't want it. Although his theatre got good notices in the nationals, it played to audiences of 14 and lost £30,000 a year.

His private life is disintegrating too. His wife left him to have an abortion and is now in a mental hospital. His mistress was "discovered" in one of his shows and is now a cinema star in London. The farmhouse where he threw scandalously memorable parties has been repossessed by the building society and he's sleeping on the stage.

Wielding a whisky bottle, he seems to feel threatened by his resident writer, of the leftist trend that hands out rides to the audience. He faces a goal sentence for assaulting his wife's psychiatrist, and there's the matter of his mistress's missing dog. Such, of course, are the difficulties which daily face the directors of northern repertory theatres. I wonder why none of them has felt impelled to stage this play—

until now? If Phoenix has anything sensible to say about life and art and audiences—or indeed about babies, bombs, and hope renewed—it certainly wasn't made clear in this crassly acted production, directed by Paul Gibson. I couldn't believe in the basic situation, the characters, their actions, their motives, or their dialogue.

Candida Boyes's design, tacking ornate gilded plaster work around the proscenium arch of the Venetian Street centre in Huddersfield, seemed to me more real than the company's stock caricatures of a philistine councillor or a racoon-coated staret.

Is it the play or just the production that's bad? I didn't believe in the press photographer who points his flashgun towards an empty auditorium instead of his subject: that's shoddy direction. But then a local paper reporter wouldn't be taking photographs anyway, and that's in the script. It's shoddy writing which has nothing to do with the real world.

Or maybe I got it all wrong and it's really a play about a dog.

CHELTEMHAM

Barry Still

CBSO/Jansons

HERE was the first of six concerts to be given this month by the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra under Mariss Jansons, chief conductor of the Leningrad Philharmonic, including no Russian music, but three works which, each in their own way, are vehicles for display.

In Wagner's Mastersingers Overture the excitement may be more in anticipation of the stage action to follow, but a fulsome and balanced reading, as now, with its opulent processional sections and splendid climax, never fails to cast its spell.

Jansons showed himself equally adept and understanding with Lynn Harrell in Schumann's Cello Concerto, clarifying the continuous structure, and feeling the furms beneath the somewhat free symphonic treatment.

Harrell, producing a richness of tone especially in the lower register, and with a nice sense of rubato and strong lyricism underpinned by an all encompassing technique, knew how to make something of the intractable finale, not one of the composer's happiest inventions nor very rewarding for soloist or listener. The Elgarian taste of the slow movement was given a new relevance by this un-English partnership.

So to the Symphonie Fantastique by Berlioz, where the CBSO sectionally and as a team, proved their virtuosity in this daring piece, the earliest on the evening's bill. At the outset violins set a pattern in pulsing, power and restraint for all the strings; cor anglais and off-stage oboe wove their planed strands in the Adagio with perfect balance; brass were bold, purposeful and controlled.

These three epithets could apply to Jansons own direction, ever imaginative (the March to the Scaffold was almost statily in its persistence) but rightly leaving Berlioz with his genius for

instrumental colour to have the last word. A magnificent start to this mini-series.

BARBICAN

Edward Greenfield

LSO Gala

GALA concerts have a way of being not so much fun as their organisers hope, either because far too much is drummed in or simply that one gets bored with a sequence of soufies instead of a proper meal. Happily Claudio Abbado and the LSO had better ideas for this gala at the Barbican in aid of the LSO Trust. Instead of getting their distinguished roster of artists (all giving their services free) to do party pieces, the programme, commendably brief, showed signs of some sort of planning.

Verdi was the main theme, and for that clearly we have to thank Abbado. So Verdi's two finest overtures, those for La Forza del Destino and Vespri Siciliani, made fiercely brilliant openers for a whole sequence of arias, three of them from Don Carlos.

It was pity that there was no link suggested between the three, but each in itself could hardly have been more dramatic. Karla Boccarelli is currently in fine voice than for some time, and the gentle shading as well as the precision of attack were a delight in Elisabetta's "Tu che la vanità." King Philip's aria "Ella giannina m'ama" found Samuel Ramey, baritone here turned bass, finely tuned in dark-toned clarity, while reversing the chronological order. Titiana Troyanos was thrillingly vehement in Eboli's "O don fatale" though in this hall her tone grew shrill.

The other Verdi item was Ford's aria from Falstaff with Thomas Allen producing a commanding range of expression in alternate red-blooded anger and cold fury. Completing a trio of the world's top baritone came Hermann Prey in Pizarro's aria. Largo al factotum from Rossini's Barbiere di Siviglia, acting out every line.

After all that it was only right to have just one soufie, and that came from the violinist, Salvatore Accardo, in the sort of trumpet display piece that deserves an airing every now and then. It can be played as dazzlingly as here, Saragat's fantasy on themes from Bizet's Carmen.

Some of these reviews appeared in later editions yesterday.



Eyeball to eyeball — Rachael Kelly's, above, in *Scream For Help*; Julia Migenes Johnson and Plácido Domingo, left, in *Carmen*; Larry Riley and Patti LaBelle in *A Soldier's Story*

**Derek Malcolm sings the praises
of Carmen and also reviews
A Soldier's Story, Phar Lap —
Heart Of A Nation, and Screem
For Help**

A street Carmen named desire



PREVIOUS versions by Godard, Saura, and Brecht, or either the opera or the Menzies story that inspired it may give a distinct feeling of déjà vu to Francesco Rosi's *Carmen* (Lumiere, PG). But the historical story of the opera from stage to screen at least has the merit of being the genuine article, both real film and real opera, less obviously interpreted than the *Man of the Year* Giovanni but as monumental as the *Man of the Year* to be true to both mediums.

This is not filmed opera but opera as film, shot on location to emphasize a reality beyond most melodrama and the historical story of the same anxious social and cultural concerns Rosi invariably brings to his work. The location shooting by Pasquale De Santis does not so much dwarf the characters as place them in context more than most stage productions could possibly manage.

Bizet's theatricality is deepened and broadened by

the real streets and taverns, the soldiers' barracks and the tobacco store. Little Spain grows effectively in the mind and sometimes to jump-fresh again. Only a few of the familiar setpieces slip awkwardly on the camera and very little of the casting seems inappropriate. Certainly that of Julia Migenes Johnson as Carmen who looks and acts the role like few others. She is surely one of the sexiest Carmen's ever. You really sense "Isidre" not "straight" into her trap.

Opposite her is a much more stolid characterization. Plácido Domingo's Don Jose, though more impeccably sung, is not up to the same level as the other. He gives him to be more wooden rather than less in the effort to underscore the distance

between the two lovers, and perhaps make a virtue of necessity, but the director's passion for some dividends but not many, particularly since *Inganno* Raimondi is so flexible as Escamille.

And I do not understand why the hyper-realistic bullfighting scene, which seems to be integral, go side by side with an almost formally operative knife scene where you see no blood at all.

These doubts apart, *Rosì's Carmen* (conducted by Lorin Maazel) has a passionate verve, and the dancing, in keeping you on the edge of your seat for some 152 minutes, it looks superb, it moves splendidly and much of its detail is extraordinary. *Rosì's* *La Bohème* is a production that shines through time and again.

Norman Jewison's Oscar-nominated *Selma* (Spartan Classics, Haymarket, etc. 15) is set in 1944 and has a black master sergeant shot dead on

a lonely road outside his base in Louisiana. He is in charge of the 8888 Central Postal Directory. The Army was segregated in those days — and it looks clear that white officers have committed the crime. But the black investigating officer from the 8888 is not as naive as the white base commander, who wants the investigation over as soon as possible.

This is not just a variant of Jewison's much-applauded in *Shogun*. *Of the Night*, in which Sidney Poitier plays a Philadelphia detective proves himself as good as any white man but a more thorough going examination of racial attitudes cast in the mould of a thriller. Based on a play by Charles Fuller, which won a Pulitzer prize, it offers contrasting ideas of black aspirations through two juicy parts for coloured actors, and a series of other cameos.

It is not mainly the performances that count in this otherwise still basically theatrical film, and they are

uniformly excellent. Both Adolph Caesar, hitherto a stage and television actor, and the unknown Howard Rollins Jr. who made his name in *Ragtime*, seize their chances brilliantly. In particular, Caesar, as the martinet sergeant who believes that blacks should obey their stereotyping by acting as much like whites as possible, carries total conviction. He is both villain and victim, an honourable man ruined by prejudice enough some 40 years after the war. But without the virtuosity of its cast, the film would look a little old hat and tacky.

It hasn't the highly cinematic flow of *In the Heat of the Night*, but it does present a good deal further. Cheaply and quickly made

because of the risk involved. A Soldier's Story is rather more than just an accurate slice of history. It is moving, too.

Phar Lap is not a Sri Lankan winner but a legendary racehorse who is the subject of the most expensive film ever made in Australia. If you think it amazing that so much money should be lavished on a picture about a dead animal, reflect that Phar Lap won 37 races in three years from 1930 onwards, before dropping dead possibly from overwork but probably from pneumonia in America during which he defeated the international field in spite of a split hoof. Australians love a winner, provided he, she or it is one of their own.

It is no surprise that the film is called *Phar Lap - Heart Of A Nation* (Warner West End; Gate, Nothing Hill, EC2). But thoroughly endorsing the title is a film son. The writer has Sydney

newspaper constructing alternative headlines before the international race — Australian Wonder Horse Beaten By American Racer Beaten In Mexico.

The film begs a large number of questions, even failing to make clear how old the horse was and what distances it ran. Which is rather like failing to tell us that Rocky was a heavyweight. It was made by part of the team who constructed the box-office winner, *The Man From Snowy Mountain* and stars the same Tom Burlinson (as Phoebe Lap's lad). But the story is a little more serious for this kind of luxury catchphrase treatment.

Phoebe Lap, bought in New Zealand for a song by an obsessed, greedy and possibly brutal trainer, and saddled with a money-grabbing owner, hated by the mobbish Australian racing establishment, is the only character in the film who none up like Arkie once

In a lifetime and deserves better than to be latched upon by humans for the sole purpose of profit. You keep watching and you can't help but look Phar-fetched.

In Michael Winner's *Scream For Help* (Lanterne, United Theatrical, 18), the daughter of a well-lined La Rochelle woman fancies her stepfather is trying to kill her mother. He is, but no one believes her. We know it from the start but the question is — when will all the other schmucks see the obvious?

The answer is in about 80 minutes, during which Rachael Kelly loses her maidenhead and almost her mind. Winner pushes his plot to further and further levels of campiness, and ends with bloodbath, the most ominously like a practice run for the forthcoming *Death Wish III*. Charles Bronson, of course, would never have let it all happen in the first

THE Australians have hit Hollywood. Three top Australian directors are releasing big American films in 1985 - a situation analogous to the "new wave" of British directors like Alfred Hitchcock and Ridley Scott, "going Hollywood" in the 1970s.

So far Gillian Armstrong (*My Brilliant Career*) has released *Mrs. Soffel*, starring Diane Keaton and Mel Gibson. Based on a true story about the love between a strait-laced prison warden's wife and a convicted murderer, to critical acclaim but slow box office.

Hand Witness by Peter (Galipoli) Year Of Living Dangerously Weir, a routine police melodrama which Weir subverts with his feeling for landscape and culture.

And, finally, he's been a hit with American critics and audiences alike.

Still to come is Bruce Beresford's realistic biblical epic *Jesus of Nazareth* and Christopher (L.A. Confidential) claims will tell "the whole story" for \$15 million and stars Richard Gere.

Beresford made one previous American film, the well-received *My Darling Clementine*, but King David is his first major studio feature.

The attitudes of these three directors to their Hollywood experiences are as different as the films Armstrong cautions, "it's a wonderful thing to have the (MGM) lion on the front of your seat. There's a wonder, since the history of the industry would be that my main ambition is to make the films I want to

Peter Weir, left, Kelly McGillis and Harrison Ford during shoot-out.

Three top Australian directors talk to M
about working in Am

Sydney to Holly

make and I don't think many of them are being made in Hollywood.

Beresford, whose next project — backed by Virgin — is a film set among the Australian aborigines, feels: "It's not as if one is a refugee from eastern Europe who can't go back home. Reading the Australian newspaper, you do get this message: 'you can't go back,' which isn't true. It's like to be able to go back and forth between Australia and Hollywood."

Peter Weir is the most enthusiastic of the three about his American experience, although in his case it came about almost by chance. While Armstrong and Beresford had planned to make their film, Weir was in Hollywood preparing to shoot *The Mosquito Coast* from the Paul Theroux novel.

Jan. Ruben and
of Witness

Bygrave
series

goes
wood

"We'd gathered a small production team, my cameraman had come over, we were sitting in a hotel all ready to start when the film was cancelled. I've never had a thing like that when you're all set to work and it's a terrible experience.

"I called my agent and I said, 'You know all those scripts you've been sending me and I've been sending back to you all these years. In six, next couple of weeks, send me only "green light" projects and if one is half-decent, I'll take it.'"

"Out of three possibilities, Weir chose Witness, already developed, scripted and with Harrison Ford cast. Signing up strictly as a hired hand on somebody else's project was a new move and he sees it as a throwback to the old days of


the 1940s and the Hollywood studio system.

"I came to realize if the Fords and the Capras had had total control, they might have had shorter careers — and made less good films.

Here on Witness I was facing a melodrama, a genre film, something one was very familiar with — go in quick, move, do it with style and grace, collect your cheque and leave.

"It was a great experiment and I think I'd like to do a couple of them now and again and put them among the projects which are much loved and more difficult to mount."


Witness has Harrison Ford as a tough Philadelphia homicide cop who has to protect a young Amish boy and his widowed mother when the child witnesses another detective's murder. Corruption



at the highest levels of the police department turn out to lie behind the crime and Ford, the widow and the child flee to Amish country and the strange but true world of the Amish people. Good-looking farmers who reject virtually the entire twentieth-century including telephones, cars, television — and the movies.

Obviously the Amish element and the contrast between the two worlds was what interested me in the script," Weir recalls. "In my first rewrite I dismissed the melodrama, removed it even, and the producer (Edward S. Feldman) brought me back to earth and back to realities.

"He spoke as a great American showman and therefore, to me, connected with the 1940s and the golden-age of Hollywood. He kept saying




'audience' and 'remember it's a thriller, and if you keep that in mind you'll construct a kind of hybrid between your style and the genre.'"

That's exactly what Weir has done, placing the relationship between Harrison Ford (in his best performance to date) and the young Amish widow at the heart of the movie, filming it with nuances and glances, in scenes from which Weir removed much of the dialogue, and at a pace slower than the Hollywood norm.

While Weir found his seven months filming in America personally as well as professionally liberating for Gililian Armstrong it was much more business as usual, albeit with a bigger budget and a major studio looking over her shoulder.

"My attitude is never to be



frivolous about the budget," she says, "but I was treated (by MGM) as though I was this unworthy person who was secretly going to go six months over if I could, and that surprised me at first. I was used to working in a one-to-one relationship with a producer rather than with a group of executives who inevitably all have different ideas. You're dealing with a bureaucracy in Hollywood."

"At the same time, I have to say I was allowed to make the film I wanted to make, the way I wanted to make it, with the cast I chose. Creatively I was given great freedom."

Taking a middle position is Bruce Beresford who points to the technical sophistication of American film-making and the advantages Hollywood money can buy. "Everything in America is geared to

letting the director do the job," he feels.

"There are experts in every branch of the business," he adds, "only half-joking. 'All Aussie film-makers want to work here because of the absolutely absurd differences between the money you can make in Hollywood and the money you can make in Australia.'"

As members of the so-called "first wave" of new Australian cinema, Weir, Armstrong and Berezofsky are being included in features for some time. What of their successors and the current film scene in Australia? Weir, for one, is pessimistic.

"There is an absolute polarisation between low-budget and high-budget films. It has caused the low-budget people to believe low-budget equals integrity, quality, the personal film. But their subject matter is too narrow and generalised to do with the public, and film writers have imposed on them, that is, we must stop making these nostalgic period films and deal with the problems of modern Australia."

"Some are fine films but they don't travel. Much of that material belongs on TV which would be alright if the film-makers were happy with that. But a lot of them still want the phone to ring from Hollywood, they want to have their cake and eat it too. A lot of these great film-makers so much as social workers or politicians of some quasi-left position."

Three top Australian directors talk to Mike Bygrave about working in America

Sydney goes to Hollywood



BRIEFING

Best films

Wetherby (Curzon West End)
David Hare's examination
middle-class English more
an impressive cinema debut
very finely acted by Vanessa
Redgrave in particular.
Dance With A Stranger
(Screen on the Hill): Miss
Newell's sociological study
the milieu within which R
Ellis (beautifully played)
Miranda Richardson) lives

and died by the hangman's noose.

Ladies On The Back Screen
Danish male director. About a feminist cabinet artists.

Brazil (Odeon, Lexington Square)
Terry Gilliam's overlong and possibly overproduced Karamazov here. Miffy says, but a real gem.

Country (Odeon, Lexington)
Much better than *Places in the Heart* in current Ameri-

can homemade cycle, with Jessica Lange excellent.

A Private Function (release): Malcolm Lowbury's debut novel about Benbury's large pig and a fine, funny cast. All our English yesterdays.

Best on TV

The Barkleys of Broadway (tonight, BBC-2, 6 o'clock): 1949 Astaire-Rogers backstage musical — their reunion after 10 years.

Les Visiteurs au Soir (Friday, BBC-2, 11.20): 1942 French.

Blossom William Richert's recently unshelved black political farce, *Winter Kills*, continues at the ICA Cinema; **Work** by Ken McMullen is at the Cinematheque.

At the Scala, two Makaveles movies, *Monday* (Montenegro) and *WR Mysteries Of The Organism*, and two Gilliams (*Time Bandits* and *Jabberwocky*) on Tuesday. A Huston double of *Under The Volcano* and *Wise Blood* shows at the Hampstead **Everyman** on Saturday.

GRAND PRIX
BERLIN FESTIVAL

VANESSA REDKLEIF
IAN HOLM

W E T H

A FILM BY
DAVID L. LLOYD

PRIZE WINNER —
1985 "The Golden Bear"
EDGRAVE
JUDI DENCH
ERBY.
BY
HARE

DANCE WITH A STRANGER

IS "ONE OF THE VERY FEW GREAT
BRITISH FILMS OF THE LAST
15 YEARS ... SEE IT."



Arletty as she-devil sent to medieval earth to destroy Love.

Viva Zapata! (Saturday, CA, 1:55): Ella Kazan's 1932 view of Mexican revolutionary hero, with Quindo as Zapata. Anthony Quinn as his brother.

Kiss Me Deadly (Saturday, CA, 1:55): 1955 Robert Aldrich-Spillane film noir, now a cult movie.

The Middle Man (Sunday, CA, 2:25): Satyajit Ray's portrait of life in 1975 Calcutta, a human jungle of corruption and poverty.

The Ledger (Sunday, CA, 1:10): John Brahm's Gothic 1944 version of Jack the Ripper story, with Merle Oberon, Cedric Hardwicke and some genuine horror.


Another Way (Wednesday, CA, 10 P): Karoly Mak's extraordinary moral tale about lesbian affair, made in 1979 with magnificent performance from Jadwiga Jankowska-Cieslak.

*Jadwiga Janikowska-Cieslak in
Wedding*

Special interest

THE National Film Theatre's Southern Comfort season, put together by Jim Pines, continues with Tobacco Road on Saturday, Birth of a Nation on Sunday and In the Heat Of The Night on Tuesday. The Japanese Writers On Film season includes Woman Of The Dunes tonight and Fires On The Plain on Monday — two once very controversial films.

Three* Guardian Lectures come up in the next few days — the Channel Four transmis-




Another Way — Television,
day

tion of Clint Eastwood's is on
Sunday at 9.45, and at the
National Film Theatre Bob
Godfrey, Oscar-winning
British animator, gives an
illustrated lecture tomorrow,
while Mark Rydell, director
of *The River*, is interviewed
after a preview of the film on
Sunday afternoon.

Four Corners Cinema,
Tower Hamlets, has a
women-only programme to-
night with Marleen Gorris' *A
Question of Silence* as its
main attraction; on Saturday,
an East End evening, ending
with D. W. Griffiths' *Broken*

enna, Sheffield, is the first man may not be the last regional theatre threatened with closure due to the Government's cost-cutting plans. Let its enterprising programme head be encouraged, and the theatre will be publicly supported by the local authority. There's time yet for the decision to close the Anvil — and transfer its resources to just one screen at the Library Theatre — to be delayed. Next week's Spinal Tap, the rock 'n' roll parody, from this Thursday, for three days, *Langs Of The Thousand Eyes Of Dr Mabuse*.

Newcastle's Tyneside Cinema next week has the Taviani brothers' beautiful *Kaos*, Barry Hines' *Threads* and Altman's Nixon tour de force, *Secret Honour*. Newcastle at the Waterside, Bristol, has the Rod Taylor-Gabriel controversial *A Man Like Eva*, in which the Fassbinder figure is played, and brilliantly, by Eva Mattes. Ray's *Magore* story, *The Home And The World*, starts on Sunday at the nearby Arncliffe.



STUART WILSON, THE MEINER
narrator. SPENCER HULPH

**"Challenges and disturbs
outstanding in an outst**

"David Hare—curren
Wetherby—imaginative, a
Derek Malcolm

**"An utterly absorbing
immaculately crafted pie**

"A complex, emotio

A FILM POLAR INTERNATIONAL AND ZENITH
GROUPS INTERNATIONAL PRESENTS AN IFC FILM

NOW SHOWING C

Film starts 2:00 (Not Sun) 4, 10 & 2:30 8:40
Seats bookable at £4.00 in advance for 8.40 per seat

**...Vanessa Redgrave is
singing cast "Sunday Times
ing as a director;
bitious and intriguing "
Guardian
brilliantly acted and
of adult drama " City Limits
anal acid bath " Star
TELEVISION A CABLE NEWS FILM
and and with the most impressive E**

Where the thinking has to start

There is a fundamental dislocation here, and it pays to pause awhile. On the one hand, Russia has a new leader. World leaders and would-be world leaders descend on Moscow in droves. Some of them are only here for the bier, and for the statesmanlike photographs that go with Chernomir's funeral. But many others — the medium to big chieftains like the British, German, Chinese and French — are anxious for thirty minutes or so of substantive chat with Mr Mikhail Gorbachev and his men. Instant headline hopes of peace and harmony may be erected on such encounters. And there, at the heart of things, is good old George — Vice-President Bush — hand posting a note inviting the general secretary to a summit in the States the moment he wants one.

But what about the other hand? Mr Reagan — he of the "evil empire" — on primetime television only the other day describing the Contra guerrillas of Nicaragua as the modern "Founding Fathers". Mrs Thatcher, whooping it up for the US Congress about Russia's ambitions for "global hegemony". In Mr Reagan's case, it is more than rhetoric. He has staked an unconscionable amount of personal prestige on getting big bucks for the founding fathers of Somoza's praetorian guard. And in Mrs Thatcher's case, too, one may suppose that she does not quote phrases against "the total triumph of Socialism all over the world" without a moment's reflection. Why, then, is the lady rushing for fruitful chats with Mr Gorbachev — "a man with whom we can do business"? Why stick your head in the lion's mouth? And why, still more crucially, is President Reagan suddenly dropping all of the summit-blocking arguments that peppered his first term, and offering young Mikhail open house?

To pose such questions — and to highlight such dilemmas — is not to seek to score cheap points. It is to talk, yet again, about the Threat, about the whole purpose of defence spending (and of the current Geneva efforts to bring it under control). For even the most rigorously free market government, there is still no free market in defence. You do not initiate programmes or authorise spending in terms of marketplace demands. You decide what the Threat may

be, and then you arm to counter it. But the business of defining the true dimension of that threat is not some rational calculation. In Russia, for instance, it is the emotional product of a long and bloody history, with the added twist of the huge military-industrial clout that the Red Army wields around budget tables. In the West, naturally, there is infinite debate. Mr Jimmy Carter defines the Threat at one level. Mr Reagan initially defines it at another, and then, as he slides a little down the scale, is denounced by erstwhile allies (like Mr Norman Podhoretz) for laying America bare. Precisely the same, non-market forces apply in Britain. In the beginning, Mrs Thatcher cheerleads for a Nato decision to increase defence spending by 3 per cent in real terms annually. Defence's slice of the cake thus grows uncomfortably fat. But at the end of the Nato obligation, Mr Michael Heseltine is left alone to forage for his extras. No one says the world in 1985 is a less threatening place and therefore we needn't spend as much. They say, we can't afford to go like this. And the Threat suddenly fades into the mists.

It is this black hole in Western logic that Mr Zbigniew Brzezinski (amongst others) fears may be cruelly exploited by a more cuddly, more visible Soviet leader. Whilst many (including, after much thumb-sucking, the State Department) were concluding this week that Mr Gorbachev was probably a good thing, Mr Brzezinski, Jimmy Carter's guru of national security, was concluding precisely the reverse. A modern, dynamic, seemingly pragmatic Russian boss, he said, could soon split the allies asunder. Having a fit man in the Kremlin was thus a Bad Thing.

One does not need to share Mr Brzezinski's wider views about Russian expansionism to see what he means. Since the West, responding to democratic pressures, changing governments, getting winds up about the economy or the price of dog licences, has an uncertain, constantly adjusting notion of what it is all about — what, in fact, the Threat is — then a smiling, adroit Soviet leadership may scent stretching propaganda pastures all set for hay-making. Mr Gorbachev (like Andropov before him) may reckon that subtle PR around the capitals of Europe can do his work for him.

That is one scenario (although it leaves the true interests, nay imperatives, of Mr Gorbachev's domestic patch out of the account). But if it is right, or partly right, how do you respond? The only way — surely, surely — is going back to basics, forming some common perception of the Threat. And that, foolishly, is precisely what is not happening. Whilst Postman

Bush is pressing cooing notes into unwearied Russian palms, Mr Reagan is hatching on Capitol Hill and elsewhere for the 26 billion dollars he needs to feed Star Wars research. Twenty-six billion dollars. A bagatelle, in one sense: a sum exceeding the annual GDP of New Zealand or Portugal in another. And what will Star Wars — a distant, roseate glow in Mr Reagan's mind, realisable only years after he has gone back to the ranch for good — achieve? The administration speaks with fatally different voices. Mr Reagan conjures up a total cocoon of security. Paul Nitze, his most experienced arms adviser, sees only area protection for missile sites — a kind of concrete MX bunker in the skies. Mrs Thatcher reaches for the cold water and then, scientific funds on offer, settles for loyalty. Other bits of Europe drag or stagger into line. It is all, in embryo, a nightmare rerun of cruise deployment, but lacking even the high-tensile strand that made that, messily, possible: we said we'd do it, so we must.

The arguments against the SDI have been rehearsed here before, and will be again. But for the moment, concentrate only on Star Wars as a surefire recipe for alliance disintegration: the New Zealand experience repeated in Cinemascope and Technicolor. The West, of course, cannot begin its defence thinking again at the drop of an ancient party apparition. But Mr Gorbachev, for ten or twenty years, is the Threat. Where does he stand? What does he mean? Unless that is where the thinking starts, then the alliance disarray over the coming few years will be fearful to behold.

The crime carousel

Mr Leon Brittan is a lucky man. At almost any other time in the last decade, a Home Secretary who published a new set of annual recorded crime statistics showing an 8 per cent rise would have got a political wallop. Just imagine the kind of tabloid hysteria which would have faced a Labour Home Secretary who produced such figures. Or rather, don't imagine it, look back at the kind of headlines which greeted Mr Merlyn Rees's 15 per cent crime increase in 1977. Had Labour been in power for the past six years, the 37 per cent rise in recorded crime since 1978 would have set the hounds baying. As it is, this week's figures, covering 1984, have emerged without much comment, still less without a popular panic. In large measure Mr Brittan

can thank the Tory Party's Fleet Street friends for this decent silence. However, there is also a deeper explanation for the relative lack of political damage to the Home Office. Most government statisticians provoke some scepticism. But at least some one somewhere in the trade believes that or at any rate finds them useful. Crime figures are different. Hardly anyone in the criminal justice system believes they have anything helpful to say about crime. Police makers in Whitehall are amongst the greatest cynics. The disclaimers and qualifications which accompany the new figures often vivid proof that Mr Brittan's department believes that figures based on crime reported to police provide a seriously misleading picture.

The Home Office's current criminological agnosticism centres on the findings of the 1983 British Crime Survey. This pulled the rug from under the traditional crime statistics by exposing vast areas of under-reporting. The inference from these findings, which is made privately by Home Office officials, is that traditional crime strategies, in particular reactive policing strategies, are no use in dealing with most offences. But this often defeatist approach clashes head-on with the Government's preferred policies of pouring money, men and extra powers into the police. Result: the money, men and powers are increased, because that is politically important to the Conservative Party, even though nobody on the inside is really convinced that they will have much of an impact, save to boost the opportunities of reporting crime for the police statistics. That in turn means a rise in reported crime, which only puts fresh Tory conference pressures on the Home Secretary, who is therefore obliged to pour in more resources, which starts the whole vicious circle over again.

Nevertheless, the new figures do have their messages and it is wrong to pretend otherwise. Though it cannot be quantified with any accuracy, it does seem probable that the rises have something to do with the crime opportunities provided by a rate of youth unemployment which ensures some of the fittest and most crime prone generations are unable to earn a living wage. What is more, the figures suggest that the 12 months of police mutual aid to defeat the miners' strike were not responsible for the rises in crime (except, arguably, in the coalfields themselves). True, recorded crime increased last year. But it went up with remarkable uniformity throughout England and Wales. The indirect effect of police absences on the picket lines is therefore seriously open to doubt. But that meant in turn that it did not

much matter that so many officers were away. The obvious conclusion is that the size of the police force could be reduced without increasing the likelihood of crime. Obvious, but it isn't going to happen.

The names of olde England

You have just returned from a long stint abroad with the British Council and have soon done the grand tour, Harrods, Fortnum & Mason, the Dorchester for the night. God's in his heaven and all's right with the world. Nothing has changed.

Nothing, that is, except the ownership. Harrods is being knocked down, though not at a knock down price, to the Egyptian Al-Fayed brothers. The others have already fallen. Sotheby's (to America), the Dorchester (Hong Kong), and the Old Vic (Canada). Parts of Harrods Court are to be privatised and the British Council itself, amidst Thatcher inspired cuts, has been given £1 million by a Japanese whisky company. Enough to make one weep on one's Times (Australian owned) or cancel one's Encyclopedia Britannica (write to Chicago).

Whether the progressive takeover of the establishment at play is a good thing is, of course, a moot point. It is not all one way traffic. We are the biggest foreign investors in the United States (including Saks of Fifth Avenue and Gimbels department stores). Is this not just the ebb and flow of the "internationalisation" of the world's economies? Up to a point, yes. What is potentially worrying is that a disproportionate number of inward takeovers have been in the service industries where we thought ourselves particularly skilful and where the companies seem to be buying up the manufacturing fiefdoms of the recession in Britain's depressed regions — as opposed to the City.

One of the motives behind the Al-Fayed takeover of Harrods is reported to be exploitation of the prestige of the name by building other stores abroad and marketing Harrods goods. Why, pray, did this not occur before to the nation of shopkeepers?

If five years of Thatcherism cannot produce better use of existing capital assets we should, perhaps, be grateful that others will do the job for us, courtesy of an entrepreneurial transplant. It is a sobering thought that if you extracted from Britain's growth in national product the contribution made by immigrants the figures would look pickier. The Dorchester and Fortnum's bound on. Even if there is no honey still for tea.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The Arts Council row that should run and run

Sir,—In an untypically confusing Leader (March 11) the Guardian suggests that the Arts Council row has grown too noisy, and wonders why.

The reason why is simple and important. The Arts Council is supposed to fight for artists. Sir William Rees-Mogg and poor Mr Rittner were appointed by Mrs Thatcher to shut the artists up and their places of work down.

This is what Mrs Thatcher has done, or tried to do, with the steel industry, the coal industry, the teaching profession, the universities, the research laboratories, the Think Tanks, British Rail and any other of the many parts of British life she doesn't understand.

The Arts Council row is therefore typical of all Mrs

Thatcher's rows. Indeed, of all rows free peoples have with central commissariats. Where it differs is that artists are professionals at rows. Complaining is one of their jobs, and their way of life being what it is, they can go on complaining, often articulately, without fear of being starved into silence.

The Arts Council row ought not to quieten down, therefore. It thought to run and run, at least until the British government stops trying to model its operation on the governments of Poland and points East.—Sincerely, David Cregan, 76 Wood Close, Hatfield, Hertfordshire.

Sir,—Historical determinism, Hegelian logic and economic, philosophical, and artistic theories to explain the

human condition since time began. These were the ingredients of Sir William Rees-Mogg's curiously intellectual lecture (Guardian March 11) entitled "The Political Economy of the Arts".

The audience barely knew where to start to dismember it, perhaps because like me they were brought up to believe that Hegel is not worthy of study, "even as error".

Only Lord Gower seemed to know what was going on. In an unintentionally funny intervention, he told us that it was wrong to suggest that Sir William was a tool of government because long before the Government came to power in 1979 he, Sir William, had advocated the economic policies which it now pursued.

Whether or not the Government is a tool of Sir William or Sir William is a tool of the Government, Lord Gower's comments were surely the final refutation of the notion that the Arts Council is independent of

government and adopts some kind of arms-length policy.

One can only look forward to its early demise under a future Labour government.—Yours faithfully, Brian Sedgewore, (Lab Hackney S and House of Commons.

Sir,—As the Administrator of Lord Gower's Business Sponsorship incentive scheme with responsibility for the West Midlands area, I read with great interest Robert Petty's refutation of Nicholas de Jongh's "regional understanding" (Letters, March 12).

Nicholas de Jongh is right to say that sponsorship is now a reality for the smaller regional and community arts organisation — The Midlands Arts Centre, Taking Steps Theatre Company, Worcester Cathedral Arts and Keele Concerts Society (to name but a few in the West Midlands) have all raised business sponsorship. Robert Petty, I suspect, has a different view of what constitutes

a "small" or a "community" arts organisation.

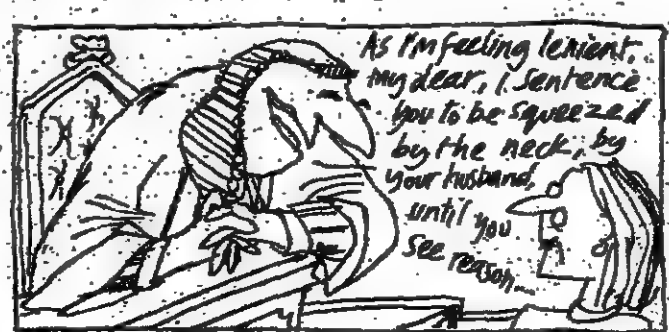
Some community arts organisations, doing excellent and creative work with small numbers of local people, may reach so limited a market as to offer few opportunities for sponsorship. Perhaps Mr Petty is referring to these. But there are many other fine arts organisations in the West Midlands which could attract sponsorship.

Most of the arts in this country are dependent upon limited public subsidy — but sponsorship is a good supplement (not substitute) to that. Now that Lord Gower has announced that £1,000 raised from first-time sponsors can be matched pound for pound through the Business Sponsorship Incentive Scheme, the way is open for the smaller regional business and the smaller regional arts organisation to get together to their mutual benefit.—Yours faithfully, Tim Savill, Association for Business Sponsorship of the Arts, London, SW1.

How misogyny tips the scales of justice

Sir,—Someone should tell Judge Thomas Pigot, who presided in the "Lady in the Lake" trial (Guardian, March 9) that Parliament has decided against the death penalty in this country. With a misogyny more appropriate in an Islamic mullah his comments and sentencing make it clear that he thinks it not an unreasonable penalty for adultery.

If Margaret Hogg had been allowed to live she could have told her side of the story. Perhaps she saw herself as a person entitled to make her own choice, rather than as her husband's property.—Yours faithfully, Margaret Pretty, 27 Bellevue Road, Kingston upon Thames.



"male bias in the ground rules and assumptions pervading criminal cases where sex and domestic violence are concerned" — in other words, one law for men and another for women.—Yours sincerely, Sylvia Jacobs, 79 Pathfield Road, London SW16.

Sir,—Dr Murray (Letters, March 8) has missed the point, which is that in a case of indecent assault, the sex of the victim should be of no moment in determining the sentence imposed on the assailant.

I express no view as to whether the sentence for persons assaulting women

Miscellany at large

Sir,—Amid the flurry of speculation provoked by Cathy Massiter's allegations of political spying, a significant fact emerges. The allegations depend on Ms Massiter's uncorroborated word and the integrity of the programme research, yet both she and the programme producers have ignored written requests to answer questions put on behalf of Harry Newton's family.

Witnesses should have no fear of cross-examination by interested parties.—Robert Milson, Cambridge.

Sir,—I trust that BBC news reporters, with their legendary penchant for the modest phrase, will dub the modest 25 per cent increase in prescription charges "the so-called Thatcher surcharge".—W. G. Harrison, Romford, Essex.

Sir,—Destoyevsky would have an axe to grind with Roy Hattersley (Endpiece, March 9) who refers to "Raskolnikov's recurring dream in The Brothers Karamazov". Another hatchet job, as usual. Raskolnikov is in that the central character of Crime and Punishment and is not even a distant cousin of The Brothers Karamazov. One wonders whether Destoyevsky's compulsory reading in the Commons. Certainly, Mrs Thatcher seems to combine the roles of Raskolnikov and the Grand Inquisitor with her Napoleonic complex coupled with a magic preoccupation with security and phone taps. I suggest that Notes from Underground and Poor Folk, by Dostoevsky, be at the heart of her handling of the coal industry and the economy in general.—Yours, David Denyer, Nottingham.

Sir,—Richard Boston is wrong to claim (Guardian, March 9) that the dome of the British Museum reading room is the biggest in Britain. It may have been when it was built (1854-57). But in 1881 R. R. Duke covered the circular courtyard of what had once been the Duke of Devonshire's Great Stables in Buxton with a dome 158ft in diameter, 16ft bigger than the British Museum's. The building, complete with dome, is now the Royal Devonshire Hospital. —Wilfred Howard, Buxton, Derbyshire.

Sir,—Could it be that the Labour Party's proposed food policy (Leader, March 8) indicates that the party is about to apply one of the most crucial lessons of history? It was, I believe, Ludwig Feuerbach, one of Marx's contemporaries (and a fellow neo-Hegelian) who attributed the failure of the 1848 revolutions in Europe to the fact that the working class subsisted on a diet of potatoes rather than more ennobling beans.—John C. Phillips, Huntingdon, Cambs.

When a chief constable bucks his local police authority

Sir,—On March 7 you printed three letters deeply concerned about the nature of the police operation which accompanied the visit of the Home Secretary to Manchester University Students Union.

The following morning, the chairman of the Greater Manchester Police Authority, Gabriell C. and myself met the chief constable, Mr James Anderson, and his deputy, Mr. We were advised that they were to call in a deputy chief constable from another force, Avon and Somerset, to investigate the operation and report on it in due course.

The investigation will, of course, be in private, as all such investigations are. It will not report until all the court proceedings and any complaints proceedings arising from the incident have been completed which, the chief constable advises may not be for another year at least.

Indeed, we were at first advised that we would probably not see the report at all, although we have a statutory responsibility under the Police Act to satisfy ourselves as to the way our force investigate complaints, and will have to set any part of the report relating to an individual complaint. We have also asked our chief constable for a report of the incident which, he states, he cannot provide (if at all) until after the report of the deputy chief constable from Avon and Somerset.

Quite clearly, this is not good enough. Therefore, when the Greater Manchester Police Authority met last Friday, it called on the Home Secretary to set up a public inquiry into the incident. We feel, as a matter of

principle, that incidents such as these, which give rise to public concern, should be investigated publicly.

Indeed, it might well be that any such public investigation would exonerate those who took the decision to investigate a private, police-led inquiry would lead only to further suspicion, distrust, and reinforcement of the belief — to which we, certainly, adhere — that it cannot be left to the police alone to investigate complaints against the police.

Police authorities are the elected representatives of the public. They have a responsibility to maintain an efficient force and to satisfy themselves about how complaints are investigated. How can they do that if they have no role after incidents like that at the students union?—Yours faithfully, (Clr. Tony Ullman, Vice-Chairman, Greater Manchester Police Authority.

Irish maze

Sir,—Your correspondent's understanding (March 8) of the IRA's communication system within the Maze prison could be improved by a short course in the Irish language ("gaelic"). The Irish for German (Géarmannach) bears a resemblance to the words for Saxon (Sasannach), also used to mean "English", or Protestant (Protestianach). The words "Heir Mór" are certainly not a Gaelic pseudonym: there are no such words in the Irish language. In fact, there is no such letter as "y" in the Irish language, the last letter being "w".—Yours sincerely, Ian Livingstone, Ilford, Essex.

A COUNTRY DIARY

NORFOLK.—It is still a little early for assessing winter's impact on insect life in this county, but indications so far suggest that February's unusually low temperatures did not greatly embarrass species in hibernation. Whenever the sun has shone for a few hours recently I have noticed drone flies buzzing about my garden. A friend sent me a cluster of small stag-beetles found in the rotten heart of an ash tree where it was clear they had been snug enough in a frosty world. When pine ivy was brought into a warm room early this month a female earwig crept out of it and climbed a wall, whereupon, for the first time, I was able to observe its curious waddling gait. February, with its freezing winds and very little snow, was the driest here for 80 years and this must have been beneficial to insects such as ladybirds wintering in hedge-bottoms where, in mild, wet winters a great many become victims of parasitic white moulds. On referring to my nature diary

for 1983, I have found evidence that the severe and prolonged inclemency of the early months was followed by the appearance of a wealth of butterflies, wasps and other insects in the spring and summer and this leads me to be optimistic about present prospects. Frogs are now spawning in a number of places, but there have been reports of many being found dead, floating on ponds when the ice melted. Those hibernating in the muddy depths may survive icing while they are completely torpid and making almost no demand on the oxygen supply, but if there is a partial thaw encouraging them to awaken and become active, this demand is increased, so that if they then become ice-locked there is a risk of asphyxiation. The sequence of events, with a thaw intervening between the visitations of Arctic weather in January and February probably accounts for the casualties.

E. A. Ellis



The worst is yet to come

Already thousands have died in the African famine disaster. Latest reports direct from the area highlighted by recent television reports confirm that the disaster is deepening.

The desperate search for food has driven tens of thousands into the already disease and drought ridden Sudan. Without immediate help countless numbers more will die — particularly those who are already at greatest risk through the frailty of age.

The help we are already giving is not enough. Donations are needed desperately to provide more food, medical and other essential supplies to save them from the worst that is yet to come.

Africa Famine Appeal

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FUTURES

MICRO GUARDIAN-PLUS THE WORLD OF SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Thursday March 14 1985 13

From laetrile to swamp rabbit milk, the health business has provided a diet of riches for the greedy. Michael Gibney considers the world of fatness, fitness and fraud

Chewing the fat

SILENT GEORGE of Shawneetown, Illinois, had a good thing going for himself, until the Feds caught up with him. He was a successful marketing agent for Swamp Rabbit Milk in vitamins J, U, M and P and which had aphrodisiac properties of such strength, that Silent George, in the interest of consumer safety, felt obliged to issue a label warning: "Do not imbibe the potent fluid in the absence of your husband, sparring partner, boyfriend, or running mate, as the action is fast and it is two jumps from cabbage or lettuce picnic to a cruise down the Nile with your version of Mark Anthony."

Silent George was an out and out fraud. However, most nutritional quacks are more devious, promoting their wares with a tangled web of fact and fancy. Many detailed academic studies published in reputable scientific journals to bolster their claims. Others rely on anecdotal evidence such as Adele Davis who wrote in her book, *Lets Get Well*: "I have yet to know of a single adult to develop cancer who has habitually drunk a quart of milk daily." (Adele Davis died of cancer.) Most quackery is harmless. Some of it, unfortunately, is downright murderous. In general, nutrition quacks promote many solutions for desperate people with complex problems. One such group are the obese.

An excellent example of the abuse of half-truths in the treatment of obesity is the use of amino acids, ornithine in particular. The amino acids, of which there are about 20, are the building blocks of protein. Two of these amino acids have direct physiological effects on aspects of energy metabolism. Both arginine and ornithine are used by clinicians to stimulate and evaluate the release of human growth hormone. This hormone causes an increase in the resting metabolic rate such that a greater proportion both of calories consumed and of body fat are used by the essential actions of the heart, lungs, kidney, gut etc. It also stimulates protein synthesis. This is music to the quack's ears: take an ornithine supplement and you raise the metabolic rate, burn off fat and build up muscle. A recent study up-market monthly, *Harpers and Queen*, carries a major feature on the wonders of ornithine.

There are, however, these problems which the quacks ignore. Firstly, the minimum dose used to stimulate growth hormone release in clinical conditions is about 15 grams administered intravenously over 30 minutes. Since the ornithine tablet recommended by *Harpers and Queen* contains about 1 gram of the amino acid, since the oral route is probably only one-quarter as efficient as the direct, i.e. route in raising blood ornithine one would probably need to take about 20 tablets, to exert any physiological effect. (This incidentally is 20 times the recommended dose.) Secondly, the published scientific data clearly shows the effect is confined, for formal reasons, to women although this doesn't prevent quacks from promoting ornithine as a body builder next to decidedly male Mr Universe-type persons.

Thirdly, although human growth hormone does stimulate muscle synthesis, it also stimulates protein synthesis everywhere else in the body including the heart, lung, kidney, gut, spleen etc. Indeed, the defect leading to excess growth hormone do not look pretty, with protruding forehead and chin. Finally, there is no record whatever of the efficacy of ornithine as a slimming adjunct.

A second aspect of quackery which also impinges on obesity is the use of oral protein supplements to exert specific effects in different tissues. Superoxide dismutase (SOD), available in tablet form in most health-food stores, is a fine example. SOD is an enzyme which acts in most cells to make sure that "peroxide" like compounds are not allowed to accumulate. These compounds arise as a normal part of the cells scheme for obtaining energy. Because the gradual loss of the ability to detoxify peroxides is associated with ageing, the quacks have decided that supplements of SOD will help stave off wrinkles.

But there's a problem. SOD is an enzyme, and all enzymes are protein. And proteins are digested and absorbed, not as proteins (that would cause allergy) but as their constituent amino acids. The body uses these amino acids to synthesize its own proteins according to its own needs. SOD synthesis, therefore, has no link whatever with SOD intake.

One of the most evil of quacks is the one which tries to sell a vitamin which isn't. In 1948, Ernst Krebs, Sr. and Jr. were jointly awarded a US patent for a method of isolating a compound from certain seeds which would be useful for the prevention of "asthma and allied diseases... eczema... arthritis... neuritis... affections of the skin, respiratory tract... etc." They dubbed this compound "vitamin B15". It isn't a vitamin. The FDA so ruled as did three US Federal Courts. Not least because "pangamic acid" was found to be carcinogenic. Now the Krebs duo were far from despondent. Indeed they may have been spurred to greater things for soon they were back on the market selling another vitamin: "Vitamin B17" or "Laetrile", its trade name. It wasn't then, isn't now and never will be a vitamin! It was a "cure for cancer" and the Krebs family promoted it so. Laetrile is a compound found in the kernels of many fruits and berries. It has a bitter taste because it is a cyanogenic compound, i.e. it can release cyanide gas. Some kernels contain up to 6 per cent by weight of cyanide releasable compounds. Laetrile has caused many deaths and landed Krebs and Krebs with a six-month jail sentence.

Vigilance against quackery is a duty of the appropriate branch of science. In Britain, the organisation best equipped to deal with such matters is the British Nutrition Foundation. Individuals readers in doubt should contact them (15 Belgrave Square, London). However, whilst vigilance is the watchword, scientific scepticism should not be the battle cry. Science must remain objective and at all times be willing, and able, to test every and any popular theory.



Too much of a good thing: picture by Denis Timper

ENERGETICS: Anthony Tucker reports on a breakthrough in battery power

Charge account

ELECTRIC traction will only become a serious proposition for road transport when rechargeable batteries of about ten times the energy density of the conventional lead-acid battery themselves become a reliable commercial proposition. Although the race has been on since the early 70s, almost every avenue of research, including that of the high-temperature sodium-sulphur battery, has run into serious problems.

There is, however, a major exception. Solid-state lithium batteries, which in their original form power heart pacemakers and which began as one of the back markers for large-scale traction until over the past decade looked better and better.

The point about solid-state batteries, rather like the "dry piles" that were produced by almost muck and magic chemistry a hundred years ago (one of these has been ringing a bell in the Clarendon Laboratory for over 140 years), is that they comprise a multiple sandwich of very thin layers of material and contain no free liquid. With modern techniques employing polymers, extremely rugged and lightweight structures, involving very large surface areas of internal contact, can be designed. Lithium and vanadium were early seen to be suitable electrode materials and, with the early technology, produced very long-life batteries for uses where a slow continuous discharge was suitable.

The question, picked up five years ago by the Department of Industry and posed through a grant at Harwell, was whether this approach could be applied equally well to the development of high rate of discharge storage batteries. The answer would be recharged upwards of thousands of times. One thousand cycles is a commercially magic figure for it implies daily use for three years, a key requirement for the lifetime of a maintenance-free power pack.

Early research at Harwell was so promising that it led to an Anglo-Danish programme, financed by the EEC, centred on Harwell and involving several universities in research on fundamental problems. From this research there emerged complex materials and laboratory scale batteries which met most of the basic requirements. Taken simply as a storage material the lithium-vanadium film developed at that time had an energy density at least an order of magnitude better than conventional lead-acid batteries. Its working temperature was only about a third of that of the sodium-sulphur battery and it was capable of withstanding high discharge rates and repeated recharging. The problem was that after a few cycles of discharge and recharging its capacity fell dramatically, to only 40 per cent of its original value.

But this problem has been largely overcome during the past year. Laboratory scale batteries (typically about one amp-hour) have shown stability over 400 cycles and have a structure which implies that, even when casing and connections are given a substantial allowance, the overall energy density of traction batteries would be between five and 10 times that of the conventional lead-acid battery.

The working temperature is now down below 100° Centigrade, which brings it into the "ideal ballpark" for traction purposes. It is important to have a working temperature that will not be affected by normal changes in daily temperature, which is low enough not to require heavy insulation and which can be maintained by the battery's own electrochemical processes. Internal inefficiencies expressed as heat are one of the important factors in design. From a purely research and materials point of view it seems that the first really practical lightweight battery system is on hand for exploitation.

In the hope of increasing industrial participation the Harwell Electrochemistry Centre has now set up a "club" of commercial sponsors who will form the working party overseeing a substantial research and development programme designed to bring a solid-state lithium technology to the point at which it can put embodied in a full-scale development.

Harwell scientists point out that, at this stage, hardly matters which traction goal is sought as the commercial starting point. The promise embraces cars of the size and weight of the VW Golf with a single charge range of upwards of 300 miles, vastly improved airport vehicles, boat traction for sensitive areas, submarines, and invalid wheelchairs.

The important issue at this stage is that the basic polymer technology is taken forward into full-scale use so that its flexibility in practical design can be demonstrated. European industry has not yet rushed forward with proposals. Perhaps one will be left to the Japanese, or the Americans to come up with real venture capital.

Two types of sexuality in the salmon's mating game

John Horsfall draws a moral from the tale of the hooknose bully and the 35cm weakling in the shallows

WHAT puzzles many people about the Darwinian theory of natural selection, and what thus makes the theory so applicable, is just how the simple rule produces such an astonishing array of diversity in the living world. How can one simple maxim explain the existence of everything from meningitis to mind?

The simple rule is, of course, that all living organisms are in the business of maximizing their reproductive output, or "fitness" as the biologists would have it. And the disbelief, I think, derives from the rather odd assumption that the world is a simple place. Now, if the world were simple, I should have to agree with the dissenters that elementary rules in elementary places produce very little in the way of interest.

But the world is an extraordinarily complicated place and its pressures, acting upon a simple truth, do produce the most remarkable consequences. Many of these can be seen in the simple rule of the hooknose bully and the 35cm weakling in the shallows.

Back in the world of biology, a fascinating recent study of the Pacific salmon has illustrated nicely just how the range of possibilities inherent in even a relatively simple environment can lead to an unexpected elaboration of fishy lifestyles.

The salmon of the Pacific coast of Canada undertake only one breeding attempt in their lives. These fish spend their formative years in the sea and, upon achieving a strong and healthy body in the salty waters, return to the rivers where they themselves were spawned. Their journey is a long and arduous one, where they shall breed is a risky one. The weaker may not have the strength to ascend the rapids and, as well as the methodical fisherman, the tactics of many is to fall to hungry bird or bear.

The females which resist the spawning grounds excavate a shallow depression in the river gravel in which they will deposit their eggs. In common with many other fish the salmon eggs are fertilized, not internally by an act of copulation, but without the female's body by a timely dissemination of the male's milt.

When each female is close to spawning the surrounding males compete for the privilege of her society, along the spawning run. The male, up to 70 cm long and powerfully built, develop the grotesque protruded jaws and elongated teeth which vernacularly characterize them as "hooknoses". Using these weapons they fight vigorously among themselves, with the largest males generally gaining positions closest to the objects of their affection, and with successively smaller fish having to establish bases further and further away. So far a rather

Nietzschean, dog-eat-dog scenario of a type, which for many, unfortunately characterizes the very essence of Darwinism.

But, look beyond the end of the salmon's nose, and the subtleties of the salmonid story begin to appear. Mark Gross, at Simon Fraser University, has recently investigated a puzzle of over twenty years standing - namely, how is it that many populations of salmon contain a proportion of much smaller males, known as "jacks", which ascend the rivers and attempt to spawn when only about half the size of the hooknoses?

There are two possible answers. The simplest is that these fish are failed males, those which were unable to gain much weight during their ocean sojourn, who nevertheless have to try their best or else fail to breed at all. Gross has discounted this explanation by noting the evidence that the two types of males are different genetic types - one is not convertible into the other by a simple change of diet or food supply. This puts the finger on the second possibility - that we have overlooked some aspect of the mating game.

Indeed, when Gross peered deeper into the cold waters of the Canadian streams he saw that these small males did more than the females, albeit in a rather subversive manner. Instead of playing the huge hooknoses at their own game, the jacks use their small size and the varied life of the land to sneak close to a spawning female. And they are remarkably successful.

Through their stealth they achieve positions only 30 per cent further away from the females (on average) than those "occupied" by their aggressive competitors. When a female jets her eggs, and these rival males let loose with the sperm, Gross reckons that some 40 per cent of the offspring will be fathered by the jacks.

Gross's observations raised two important questions about the salmon. First, although the jacks do manage to fertilize a surprising proportion of eggs, they still do not quite achieve the fitness of the hooknoses - rather only about two-thirds of it - and so how does this genetic type of male manage to persist in the population?

Well, the world is not a simple place and the fitness of an animal has many contributory components. When Gross examined the mortality figures for the two types during their maturation period in the ocean, he found that the chance of a hookbill

surviving to its breeding attempt was only 5 per cent, compared to about 15 per cent for the jack males.

It is not that one type is more at risk than the other - for they both suffer similar annual mortality rates - but that the jack male cuts his snarling short at an age of only two years, whereas the hooknose has signed on for the maximum term (similar to the females) of three. These two contrasting strategies of males persist in the population by being good at different things - one at surviving to breed, and the other at acquiring females if it ever gets the chance.

To return briefly to my more general comments on the way that Darwinian selection can create great complexity in living organisms - the salmon example, although unusually well researched, is not at all unique. Similar biological phenomena have been discovered in as diverse as birds and bees, and the coexistence of the two sexes, at roughly equal proportions in most species of higher animals, is a fundamentally similar phenomenon. And that thankfully is where the similarity between salmon and sex comes to an end.

Dr John Horsfall is at the Department of Zoology at the University of Oxford.

Death: the price of life?

Andrew Goldsworthy continues the old age debate

A matter of life and death

As might be expected, cultures taken from embryos lasted longer than those from adults which had already passed the peak of their life-span. The rate at which cultured cells age appears to be under genetic control since the division limit (the number of divisions before the cell line dies) is characteristic of the species from which it came, yet cancer cells (in which the normal genetic mechanisms have gone awry) will divide indefinitely and tissue cultures derived from them are potentially immortal.

Not only is the age of its cells under genetic control, but the point in the life-span when the organism occurs is also under genetic control. Death occurs, not at the division limit of the cells (which may in fact never be reached) but when their gradually failing metabolism in some vital organ is no longer able to support its demands made on it.

This in turn depends upon the nature of the organism, which may themselves be under genetic control - for example, a man may die

because of an excessive strain on his heart imposed by a genetic tendency to be overweight.

In short, there are genes which determine the rate of cellular ageing, and probably a whole host of genes, which determine the point at which the ageing curve at which a catastrophe occurs and the organism dies. It is selection among all these genes that sets the life-span for the species.

Of course, none of this answers the question, why do we have to die at all? Without the frame of reference imposed by cellular ageing, the genes which determine the point along the ageing curve at which death occurs would be without effect. Why then did cellular ageing evolve, and what is its mechanism?

Perhaps its most important feature is that it does not occur in unicellular organisms which reproduce only by simple division into two equal halves. It occurs only in organisms which differentiate so that the reproductive cells are different from the rest.

The reproductive cells (the so-called germ line) are potentially immortal and their daughters are passed on from generation to generation, whereas the rest of the cells (the somatic cells) are subject to cellular ageing.

The mechanism by which cells age is unclear, but it is often associated with an enhanced rate of protein breakdown caused apparently by an increase in the amount of digestive enzymes present and also an increase in the number of lysosomes, which are the tiny membrane-bound sacs inside each cell that contain them. This suggests that the cells of our bodies may be programmed to very slowly digest themselves by an active, organised and deliberate process which eventually reproduces up life is past.

Why does this self-destruction occur and what advantage can it hold for the species so that natural selection favours it? The answer almost certainly lies in the fact that it speeds up evolution. Large multicellular animals have in most cases to grow from single cells, which means that the young are very much smaller than the parents, and therefore at a competitive disadvantage.

Evolution depends upon natural selection operating on genetic variants to select organisms which are better adapted to the environment than their parents. If all the adults of the species were potentially immortal they would, by virtue of their size, compete "unfairly" with their offspring so that even the improved variants would tend not to survive.

Compare this with a species where the adults are programmed to die after a more or less fixed life-span. Here the young ones have less competition from their parents and improved variants have a greater chance of survival. This species would evolve faster than the first, become steadily fitter and eventually would be the only one to survive. It is therefore not too difficult to see how genes which promote ageing and death are selected for and maintained in the population, but how and when during evolution did this first happen?

The answer to this is almost certainly as soon as possible. This would be in unicellular organisms which reproduce by forming large numbers of spores or gametes. Such organisms still exist today and their reproductive cells are

generally formed within the body of the parent cell which ultimately bursts to release them.

In order to reproduce, much of the parent cell is digested away and rebuilt into the new germ cells. In effect, the parent cell sacrifices itself for its young and is programmed to do so by its own genes as the final chapter in its life history.

When organisms evolved to become multicellular, different cells tended to become specialised for different functions with only a restricted number forming the germ line. However, the same principle still applied: in order to fend the developing germ cells, the contents of the parental cells were digested, even in other parts of the organism.

In this case, the whole organism might sometimes be sacrificed so that the germ cells, and hence the species, would have the greatest chance of survival.

The speed at which cells age is under genetic control. This is borne out by some of Bayliff's experiments in which he showed that tissue cultures from long-lived species tended to survive longer

than similar cultures from short-lived species. As such, the speed of ageing will be amenable to natural selection to give the optimum rate.

If it is too fast, the organism dies too soon and the species cannot produce sufficient offspring to maintain itself. If ageing is too slow, the survival of the species is threatened by a retarded rate of evolution.

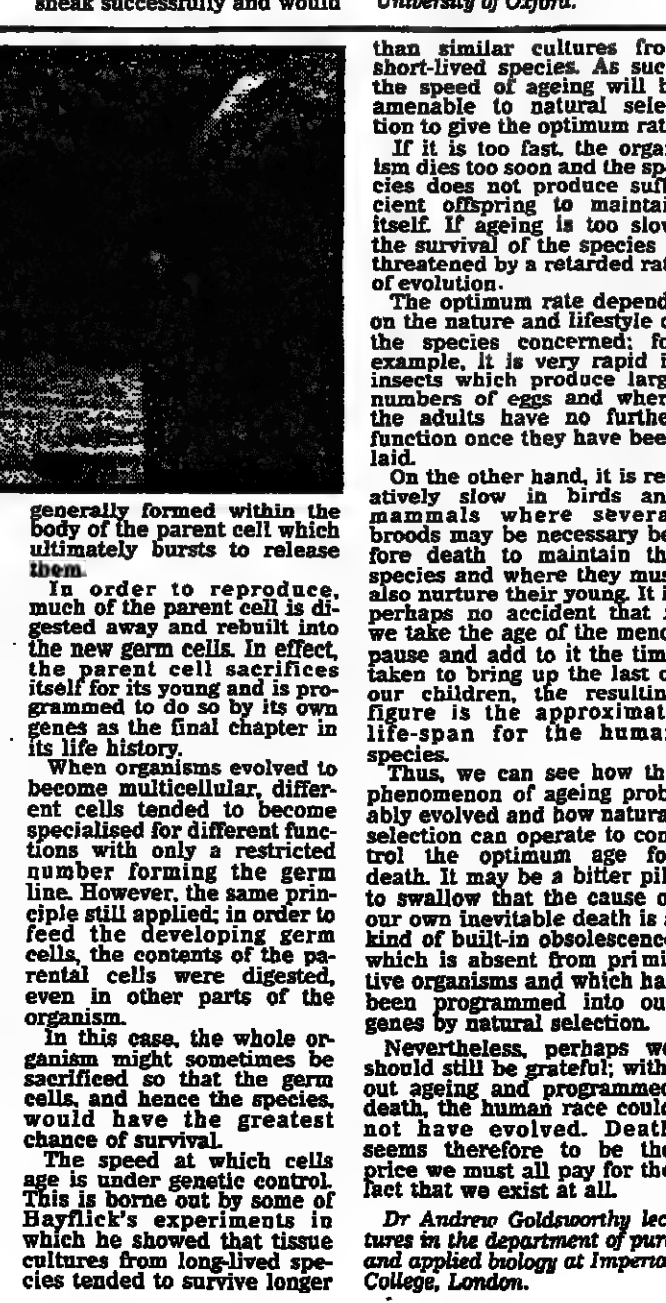
The optimum rate depends on the nature and lifestyle of the species concerned; for example, it is very rapid in insects which produce large numbers of eggs and where the adults have no further function once they have been laid.

On the other hand, it is relatively slow in birds and mammals where several broods may be necessary before death to maintain the species and where they must also nurture their young. It is perhaps no accident that if we take the age of the menopause and add to it the time taken to bring up the last of our children, the resulting figure is the approximate life-span for the human species.

Thus, we can see how the phenomenon of ageing probably evolved and how natural selection can operate to control the optimum age for death. It may be a bitter pill to swallow that the cause of our own inevitable death is a kind of built-in obsolescence which is absent from primitive organisms and which has been programmed into our genes by natural selection.

Nevertheless, perhaps we should still be grateful; without ageing and programmed death, the human race could not have evolved. Death seems therefore to be the price we must all pay for the fact that we exist at all.

Dr Andrew Goldsworthy lectures in the department of pure and applied biology at Imperial College, London.



Death: the price of life?

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FUTURES MICRO GUARDIAN

Thursday March 14 1985 15

Bridge is a social game—so what do you do if you run out of partners? Mitchell Symons gives a guarded welcome to one electronic solution

An expensive way of developing your talent, preserving your ego, and protecting your reputation

FOR THE newcomer, a bridge club is often like a genetic squash club: snarling, elderly men working out their aggression at the bridge table. As an average club player, I've had my parents questioned, my sanity doubted and my ego destroyed—merely for taking a fessive effect that this might have on a sensitive soul seeking to progress from friendly "kitchen" bridge to club standard where the stakes and the ladder can be high!

With this in mind, the BBC Bridge Companion, launched last week and available by mail order, is a welcome addition to the plethora of aids and words currently on the bridge market.

Introducing the Bridge Companion to a gathering of distinguished bridge writers and players, Bryon Parkin, Managing Director of BBC Enterprises, declared that "the BBC only puts its name to quality products." For once, this was actually an understatement. A remarkable innovation in a computer solely for bridge only accepting specific cartridges written in its own, high-level language: bridge Machine Code.

The universal technical criticism, that vulnerability was not a feature, has apparently been remedied in time for the machine's public launch.

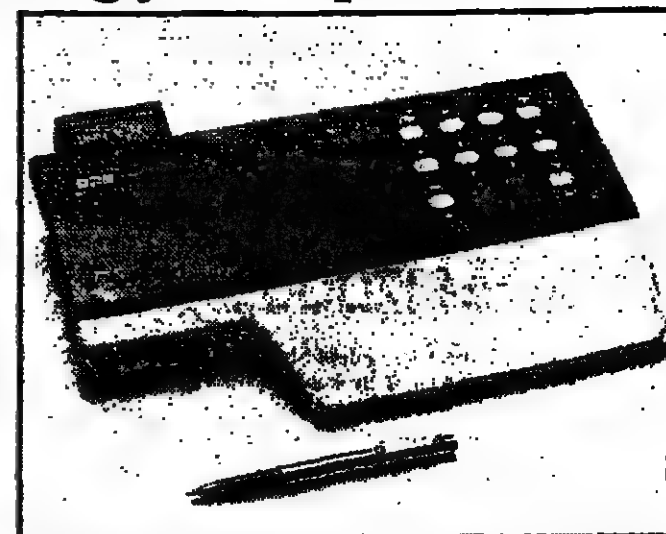
The Bridge Companion cleverly turns its main advantage, that it can bid and play randomly dealt hands into a virtue: it does not seek to obviate playing bridge with people. This is a primary objection to the machine's very existence: bridge, unlike chess, is a "personal" game where luck, psychology and instinct all play their part. No machine, and the BBC's Companion (unlike its inferior American counterpart) doesn't attempt to replace the interplay of human beings. The BBC's Companion, says Symons, is long as it does not do for

bridge what television light entertainment did for the music hall.

However, apart from these two reservations, the BBC Bridge Companion is that rarity in the bridge technology line: a machine which lives up to its promises. Having seen and tested bridge programs for all the main micro-computers, one is left with a justifiable cynicism: yes, they do what they claim to do but take an eternity to get going and require the same manual dexterity as a game of Space Invaders; and the graphics are dreadful: instant neoplasia.

The Bridge Companion, with superb design and graphics by Tony Reynolds, is simple to use, responsive and, even if it does cost as much as three putative television licences, is probably worth the money.

BBC Bridge Companion



Computers that read your mind

You know roughly what you want, but you can't program it. Don't worry, says Jack Schofield. The looming generation of micros will be able to do the hard bit



"SIMME DA BILLS" might be a perfectly good command in a "fourth generation" computer language (4GL). This fact is currently obscured in a morass of jargon, and the most tedious programming, demand-level adaptability, user-machine insulation, application expandability, workstation environment—and the fact that no one actually knows what a 4GL is.

The first generation programming language was machine code, groups of binary numbers. On the original MITS Altair micro, launched in 1975, machine code was entered directly by teletype by copying switches on the console. The second generation was assembly language, where mnemonics are used instead.

LDA means "load the accumulator with." ADC "add with carry," and so on. Third generation languages are high-level ones such as Fortran, Cobol, Basic, Pascal and Fort. What ever 4GLs may be, they must represent a considerable step up from these.

And the key fact is that they are non-procedural. What the first three generations have in common is that you have to tell the computer exactly what to do, i.e. program it. A program is a set of procedures: each procedure has to be followed step by step. In a non-procedural language the user can tell the computer what he wants, and the software works out how to do it. A typical program might be: "Show all salesmen's expenses for February where sales lower than January; calculate bonus; deduct 10 per cent."

The user's definition of what he wants constitutes the program (result-oriented programming). As users will vary in expertise, the software has to cope with many different levels of request and old-fashioned adaptability. Once the "program" has been written, the user is likely to want to know or do more, so it has to be possible to extend it (application expandability).

However, the user has to be protected from all the fine detail of running the application, such as opening and closing files, user-machine insulation, and so on. From a desktop, and not requiring the direct involvement of a data

processing department (data-station environment). This contrasts with the way mainframe applications are normally implemented. First the user has to write a report to his boss, showing need. Eventually this winds up with the data processing (dpm) manager, who puts a systems analyst on to the job. The report is rewritten to make it feasible in computing terms. Software and schedules are drawn up. The programmer is assigned to the job. After a considerable amount of coding and debugging, the program is eventually completed and run.

Unfortunately the programmer has to be involved in the systems analyst's thought, which is what the user wanted, which is what the data manager thought was possible, based on what the user's boss thought he ought to have. In other words, the user has to do what the user wants at all. But anyway, two years have passed, and the user now wants something different, or else he has—more likely—either left the company or bought his own desktop micro. 4GLs avoid these problems by letting users do their own programming in their own language.

The time when you can sit down and type 'Do payroll' is as far away as ever

It is obvious that the great mass of professional Cobol and Fortran programmers are not going to be thrown out of work overnight. 4GLs only really apply to what IBM calls "information centres," not to computing in general. The time when you can sit down and type "Do payroll" is as far away as ever.

There must still be (again, in IBM's terms) a "development centre" where new applications are written and old ones maintained, and a "production centre" where bread-and-butter tasks like invoicing and stock control are run.

However, when it comes to fishing information out of a database, 4GLs represent a huge step forward, and for this reason they are important. In fact, there is no agreed definition of what a 4GL is, and numerous products are proclaiming their 4GL-ness.

From the microcomputer point of view, the first 4GL was Fort, which would have been called "Fourth" except Charles Moore's IBM 1130 would only accept five-letter file names. Though successful, Fort is now generally agreed to be a third generation language.

The next 4GLs were program generators: they actually generate programs in languages such as Basic and Cobol (which in turn generates machine code). Examples are Sybase (System C), The Last One (D.I. Systems) and Codewriter (Codewriter Ltd). While these are productive and easy for non-programmers to use, they are still—like Fort—procedural. The computer still has to be told step by step exactly what to do.

On mini and mainframe computers there are numerous report generators and application generators that work in a similar way. System Builder (Cosmos) and Powerhouse (Cognos) are examples. They are used mainly by programmers to implement applications more productively. But this is still some way from having the end user push all the buttons himself.

is a mainframe program which has actually been written to run under the IBM PC's standard operating system, PC DOS.

All these become real 4GLs through the use of ancillary "front ends" such as Basic or English. Table Talk (Focus) and Natural Language (Microdata).

When you sit down at a Microdata M-1000 workstation, you identify yourself to the system and it opens a PKF on you—a personal knowledge file. Thereafter it remembers what you tell it, and tries to work out how you use words. If you type "Show me all the outable pig bills," it will construct its own database search routine to try to do this, then ask "Was this what you wanted?"

If not you can try again. If stuck it will ask for synonyms for words it doesn't recognise, or be allowed to ignore them, or offer a multiple-choice selection of options as a prompt. As you work, it learns. It means you don't have to learn a computer language; you don't have to get the syntax right, and you don't even have to be able to spell, since the system will make an intelligent guess in cases of doubt. "Simme da bills" is a perfectly acceptable command. The only thing that the system requires, for ease of use, is that your idiosyncrasies are reasonably consistent.

So far, you will have noticed, you need a hefty bit of kit to run a 4GL. The average hardware cost is about \$25,000, and the software is also pricey. PCFocus, at \$1,595, is cheap only compared with the cost of the mainframe version of the same program, which is \$110,000.

However, this summer Atari is threatening to launch 68,000-based micros of comparable power with 512K of RAM, disc drive and monitor for under \$2,000, with hard discs at around \$400. And as the prices of Motorola 68020, Intel 286 and National Semiconductor 32016 32-bit chips fall, clearly this kind of system will become common.

As before, advances in hardware will lead to more powerful software. With mainframe power available at micro prices, fourth generation languages should at last enable ordinary people to exploit it.

How Glasgow leads a shrinking world

What would John Knox say about a memory chip that lets you read five Bibles in eight seconds? Peter Large reports

BRITISH research is set to produce computer chips so fast that the contents of the Bible five times over—can be inscribed on a pinhead.

A team at Glasgow University, led by Professor Chris Wilkinson and Dr Steven Beaumont, is already routinely carving lines into silicon and gallium arsenide which

are only a millionth of a centimetre across. That means that about 6,000 memory cells storing a chip's information could be fitted into the width of the average human hair. On that basis Professor Wilkinson has produced his calculation of five Bibles on a pinhead.

Already there are memory chips on sale from which the contents can be plucked at a rate of more than one bit of basic information every 30 millionths of a second. Therefore (in abstract theory) those five Bibles could be read in less than eight seconds.

But that is the speed for silicon chips. Gallium arsenide, one of the III-V compounds, is a material in which electrons behave more friskily than they can in silicon, and that material looks likely to

replace silicon for the top speed de-luxe chips of the 1990s.

Dr Beaumont says he is confident that the Glasgow work leads the world in miniaturisation in gallium arsenide, and to his knowledge, only Bell Labs rival them in silicon.

The team has already built field-effect transistors a tenth of the size of the "state of the art" in commercial production. But Dr Beaumont believes they are at the foreseeable limit of miniaturisation for real engineering. Nevertheless, they expect to be creating full circuitry within a year, and microchips proper in five to 10 years.

They have been given a further grant of £500,000 for the next three years from the Science and Engineering

Research Council. Half of that will go on new equipment, including a one-off enhancement of leading-edge commercial production equipment.

The method they are using is electron beam "writing." An electron microscope's emitted beam is controlled by computer to transfer the design patterns into the chip's surface. It is one of several techniques that have replaced the chemical etching methods which have become inadequate for a microchip's density of circuitry before the end of the 1970s.

In those ancient days the debate about the number of angels that could dance on a pinhead was as uncertain in solid-state physics as it was in medieval theology. Now the counting has begun.

... and how freewheeling electrons offer a shortcut to the future

THE Glasgow research—and similar work around the world—looks likely to provide machines that will do what we want, but by means we cannot follow.

This will bring microchips very full circle. The root of it all—the invention of the transistor at Bell Laboratories in 1947—was itself based on the work in quantum mechanics which got seriously underway in the 1920s. Without that understanding of how electrons in metals are free to move and conduct electricity, the chip would not have been born.

But, until today, when those quantum effects have been impinged beyond the basics in working chips, they have usually been a hindrance, not a help: electrons have tunneled off to do their own thing and messed up the works.

Now, at this new level of ultra-miniaturisation, quantum mechanics can come into their own, with the electrons choosing their own obscurely logical paths along which to do our bidding.

The Glasgow team is cooperating with Nottingham and Warwick universities in the physics involved, and Dr John Barker (who commutes between Warwick and Colorado State University, where he is affiliate professor of theoretical physics) has explained some of the possibilities.

He envisaged chips made from gallium arsenide in which there are no human-devised physical roads for the electrons to follow. Those chips would only contain "quantum pits" for the electrons to fall into, plus a few directional walls pointing the way home. The electrons

would tunnel their own diverse routes—and do so more quickly than by following today's carved roads.

Dr Barker says that in experimental work so far electrons have tunneled through gallium arsenide from one chip cell to another, 20 atoms apart, in one third of one trillionth of a second.

He points out that it is impossible at that speed to measure what is happening—even in dimensions 25 times cruder than the Glasgow achievement of five Bibles on a pinhead. And even if it were possible to do so, it would be disastrous—because any measuring method would destroy the work going on in that microscopic world.

Therefore, our knowledge would be confined to what information, and what instruc-

tions, had been fed into the chip. What was actually happening to that information, and where it was at any given instant, could only be known by statistical theory.

But Dr Barker points out that long before we get down to those levels, we can produce self-organising chips that arrange affairs for themselves in ways that are somewhat similar to the workings of biological cells.

Research chips have been made which contain no rigid logical sequence of operation. They are collections of processing and storage components which not only work in parallel but can also manage themselves, so that if one part ceases to function the rest take over of their own accord. In essence, the electron has already taken over.

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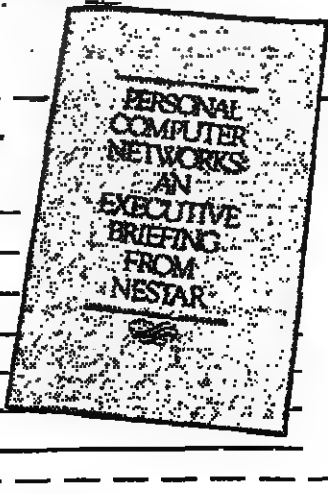
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Playing the negadecimal game

Keith Devlin returns to all sorts of number bases

In previous instalments of this column I have talked about the use of different number bases for representing numbers. The most familiar system to us, of course, is the decimal system. This makes use of the ten digits 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 to represent numbers, and in our arithmetic we require a unit column, a tens column, a hundreds column, and so on. Computers make use of the binary system, where there are just two binary-digits (or bits) 0 and 1, and where arithmetic requires a unit column, a two column, a four column, a eight column, and so on. In other words, in binary arithmetic we must "carry" whenever a multiple of two occurs in any column, in binary whenever a multiple of two occurs.

Mankind makes use of decimal notation because people have ten fingers; computers use binary notation because a computer is, at heart, a two state machine, the current in a circuit being either on or off. The main problem with the binary system is that it takes a comparatively long "word" to denote even moderately large numbers. For instance, the number 229 expressed in binary notation is 11011001. Starting from the number 1, the units, the number is: $(1 \times 2) + (1 \times 4) + (0 \times 8) + (1 \times 16) + (1 \times 32) + (1 \times 64) + (1 \times 128) = 229$.

Consequently, all modern computers have built-in routines which automatically convert numbers from decimal form to binary and back again, allowing human operators to communicate with the machine in everyday decimal form.

But sometimes it is necessary for the programmer to handle the numbers in the machine in the form they are stored in the memory. This can be made easier by utilising the so-called negadecimal system, which is the number system with base 16.

This has the effect of replacing four columns of binary by just one column of negadecimal (because 16 is the size of the unit column in binary, starting from the right). In other words, every negadecimal digit specified by the programmer determines four binary digits in the computer. There are fifteen negadecimal digits:

0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, A, B, C, D, E, F.
So, for example, the negadecimal number 1B5F represents the number: $(5 \times 1) + (15 \times 16) + (11 \times 256) + (15 \times 4096) = 61,457$.
i.e. 7157 in decimal notation. (B is 11, 5 is 5, F is 15, and $16 \times 16 = 256$, $16 \times 16 \times 16 = 4096$). In practice, programmers usually need to make use only of negadecimal numbers involving two hex digits. This is because the bits that make up a negadecimal word are grouped into bytes, collections of eight bits, or groups of four bits, called nibbles. Two hex digits completely specify all the bits

in one byte. So far, I have only been talking about positive whole numbers, of course. Fractions can be handled by specifying a decimal/binary/hexadecimal point. There are various ways of doing this, but that is another story. What I want to look at now is how negative numbers are handled. The most common method used in computers is for one bit of each computer word to be reserved to denote the sign of the number (say with a 0 denoting a positive number, a 1 a negative number).

Calculators usually work like this, except that on the display 4 minus sign appears at the left-hand end of the number, instead of a 1, and nothing appears when the number is positive. The computer hardware is then constructed to keep track of the signs of numbers during arithmetic operations. But other methods have been considered.

Anyone who has used one of those mechanical calculating machines that used to fill offices 20 years ago will appreciate one of these methods. On those ancient machines (which worked in decimal arithmetic), if you subtracted 1 from 0, the machine would display an entire row of nines. This is because, as far as the machine was concerned, this really was -1. If you added 1 to a full string of nines, you would get a carry all the way along the number, and off the left-hand end, leaving zero: $(-1) + 1 = 0$. Similarly, in a computer, a complete row of ones could be used to represent -1. In both these systems, it is easy to see

how any negative number could be represented, not just -1.

Even more intriguing is to use a negative base in the decimal/binary/hexadecimal system. You could represent your numbers in the negadecimal system, where the base is -10. In this system, the number 21 is equal to the decimal number: $1 + (1 \times -10) + (2 \times -10 \times -10)$, i.e. 191; 35 in negadecimal is the same as the decimal number: $5 + (3 \times -10) = -25$.

So in negadecimal, negative numbers (like -25) can be represented without negative signs being necessary. In fact, any number can be written out in negadecimal notation, and regardless of whether the decimal number is positive or negative, no sign is necessary in negadecimal.

It is quite amusing to spend a few minutes converting numbers from decimal to negadecimal and back again, and to work out how to perform addition and multiplication of numbers written in negadecimal notation. An ordinary microcomputer can easily be programmed to act as a calculator for numbers in negadecimal format, and this makes a nice exercise in computer programming.

The negadecimal system could be used as a basis for computer hardware design, and this would mean that it was not necessary to have a sign bit in computer words. Though this has been seriously considered, I am not aware that it was ever used in practice.

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Enclosures should be marked - APPOINTMENTS G.E.
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good knowledge of information retrieval through the use of modern computer techniques. The salary will be dependent upon age, qualifications and experience. Other benefits will include a non-contributory pension scheme, free restaurant, sports and social facilities on site and, where appropriate, generous relocation assistance.

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Starting salary may be above the minimum of one of the ranges £7,315-£9,790 or £9,365-£12,025, depending upon qualifications and experience. Promotion prospects.

For further details and an application form (to be returned by 12 April 1985) write to the Civil Service Commission, Alencon Link, Basingstoke, Hants, RG21 1JB, or telephone Basingstoke (0256) 468551 (answering service operates outside office hours). Please quote ref: G/6486.

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The salary is negotiable in the range £12,488-£15,311.

Further details of the post may be obtained from the Office Manager, CET, 3 Devonshire Street, London W1N 2BA. Written applications (no application form is provided) should reach the Office Manager no later than 26th March, 1985.

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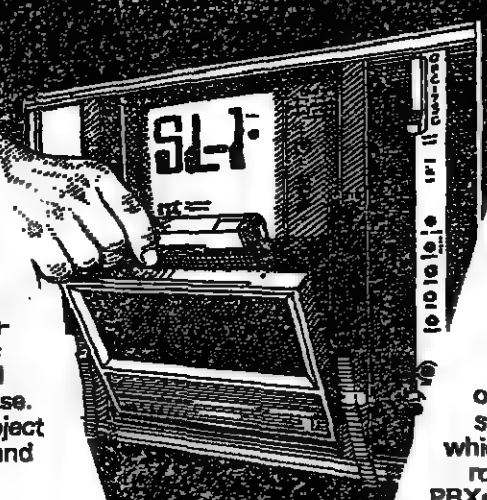
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The appointments are to be made as Teaching Company Associates and financed jointly by the Science and Engineering Council, Department of Industry and Philips Electronics. The successful candidates will be employed initially by the Polytechnic for a two year period, those associates demonstrating the ability to produce and implement effective solutions to major problems may be considered for career appointments within the Philips Group. Preference will be given to applicants aged between 23 and 28 having experience of manufacturing information technology, process control automation or shop floor data, organisation and analysis. Additionally they should have the motivation and commitment to become engineers of international standing.

The commencing salary based on age and experience will be in the range £7,548-£10,251 p.a. The Polytechnic can assist in finding accommodation and relocation expenses will be available where necessary. For further details and application form please call our 24-hour telephone answering service, 323126, or write enclosing foolscap s.a.s. to Mrs Linda Morris, Admin. Asst. (Recruitment), Newcastle-upon-Tyne Polytechnic, Ellison Building, Ellison Place, Newcastle-upon-Tyne NE1 8ST, to whom completed forms should be returned quoting ref. no. by 28.3.85.

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There are several vacancies in the Linguist Officer Class in central London. Duties comprise written translation (mainly into English) and foreign document research. Candidates must be proficient in French and Italian or in French to mother-tongue or bilingual standard, with ability to work from English into French, or in Russian, plus French, German, Hungarian, or Romanian. They must have, or obtain in 1985, an appropriate degree with at least second class honours, or an equivalent qualification, or have equivalent experience.

All candidates must be British or Commonwealth citizens and be proficient in English to mother-tongue or bilingual standard.

Initial appointment will normally be to the Linguist Officer grade (salary £7315-£7900), but there may be one or possibly more posts in the Higher Linguist Officer grade (salary £7970-£12,025). Starting salary according to qualifications and experience. Promotion prospects.

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**ADA SCIENTIFIC
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Applications are invited for the post of Senior Research Assistant, Department of Statistics and Computational Mathematics, University of Liverpool. The post is funded as part of an ESRC research project. It is for one year in the first instance. Applicants should have a strong research background in statistical analysis, computer science or a related scientific discipline such as mathematics, engineering, and considerable computer programming experience in one or more of the above areas.

Post renewable from April 1, 1985, at a salary as possible (fixed) or at an agreed salary on the scale £12,100-£18,100 per annum.

Applications, together with the names of three referees, should be received not later than March 30, 1985, to the Director of the Department of Statistics and Computational Mathematics, PO Box 147, Liverpool L69 3GB. Further particulars may be obtained on request.

Quote Ref: RV/9812G.

**Manchester Polytechnic
RESEARCH
ASSISTANT**

Applications are invited for an inter-disciplinary research project: Technology Assessment of Fibre Optics.

Opportunities exist to register for the research degrees of MPhil or PhD and some teaching at degree level will be required.

The person appointed should be a technologist with an interest in the social sciences, a technologically-aware social scientist or a person from an interdisciplinary background (e.g. degree in science policy). The appointment will be for two years with the possibility of renewal.

Salary scale: £8,405 to £13,000 per annum.

Application form, returnable by March 30, 1985, and further details from Dr John Langrish, Dean, Institute of Advanced Studies, Manchester Polytechnic, All Saints, Manchester M15 6BH. Please quote Ref. No. S/165.

**Imperial College of
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Department of Chemistry****CASE RESEARCH STUDENTSHIP**

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(2) The kinetics of active extraction (Dr. Nicholson in collaboration with P.P.F. International, part of the Unilever Group).

Applications, including a curriculum vitae and the names of two referees, should be sent to Dr. Nicholson as soon as possible to Dr. Nicholson or Dr. John Langrish, Imperial College, London SW7 2BZ. Further details can be obtained on request.

**University of
Leicester
Department of
Geology**

**POSTGRADUATE
PROJECTS**

The Department invites applications from recent graduates and final-year students in Geology to undertake research projects in the following areas: mineral, molecular and evolutionary geology.

Enquiries including a cv and the names of two referees, should be sent to the Department Secretary, Department of Geology, University of Leicester, Leicester LE1 7RH, by March 29, 1985.

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Applications are invited from those who expect to graduate with at least an upper second class honours degree or those completing a post graduate qualification. Research in the CEEB focuses on scientific and engineering problems associated with fossil-fired and nuclear plant and longer term research into, for example, alternative power generation.

The salary on appointment for graduates will be approximately £8,400 p.a. and for those completing a PhD approximately £9,400.

Graduates who have the required qualifications and appropriate background and wish to be considered for these vacancies should send immediately, details of age, qualifications, experience etc. to WHF Brooks, Manager of Personnel and Administration, Technology Planning and Research Division, Courtenay House, 18 Warwick Lane, London EC4P 4EB quoting reference G/185.

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The appointment is funded by the Arthritis and Rheumatism Council and is tenable for a three year period. Applicants should be post-doctoral or equivalent and have a good practical knowledge of the techniques required of protein isolation and purification including SDS-PAGE, immunoblotting and FPLC.

Application forms and further particulars from the Personnel Officer, University of Bath, BATH, BA2 7AY, quoting ref. no: 85/39. Closing date: 28th March, 1985.

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Colworth Laboratory, Bedford

Challenging posts now exist in the largest food research establishment in Europe which also has substantial activities in biotechnology and health care. You should have professional qualifications in electrical / electronic engineering, mechanical engineering or chemical / biochemical engineering, some experience in the areas outlined below, excellent communication skills and the potential to operate effectively in a challenging multidisciplinary environment.

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Salary £9,000-£16,000

There are vacancies for engineers with experience in industrial robotics, automated mechanical handling systems and control systems. The work is concerned with designing and evaluating state-of-the-art instrumentation and systems for manufacturing operations principally in the food industry. This involves development engineering activities from feasibility studies to the design and commissioning of production prototype machinery and process control equipment.

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Salary £10,000-£17,000

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FOOD PROCESSING ENGINEER (MEAT)

Salary £9,000-£16,000

The vacancy would suit applicants with a chemical / biochemical engineering background who have gained experience in the food manufacturing industry particularly in the meat area. The work is to investigate new food products and new manufacturing systems using a range of engineering skills and abilities.

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The vacancy requires a first degree in chemical or biochemical engineering and at least three years' experience in research or development in a bioprocessing field. The work involves feasibility studies and development of a range of new ideas for healthcare and food products.

Benefits are highly competitive and include relocation costs where applicable. Application forms can be obtained from Miss P. Grayson, Recruitment Manager, Unilever Research, Colworth Laboratory, Sharnbrook, Bedford MK44 1LQ. Tel: Bedford (0234) 761781 ext. 2232 (Ansaphone outside office hours).





The Admirable Mountbatten

by Ludovic Kennedy

Mountbatten. The official biography, by Philip Ziegler (Collins, £15).

A BOOK of 700 pages on the life of a man about whom so much has already been said, and who in his lifetime said so much about himself, might seem a daunting prospect. Is there really anything more to add about this great figure, and do we want to hear it even if there is?

The answer to both questions is Yes. The Mountbatten that Philip Ziegler here presents to us is a different and more sympathetic Mountbatten than the one we knew (or rather didn't know) before.

So much about him strikes one afresh. The parallels with Nelson, for instance. Both men were extraordinarily vain, loved posturing in medals and decorations. Both had immense courage, moral as well as physical, drive, imagination and leadership. Both were generous in praise, harsh in criticism; both needed not just the respect of their subordinates but their love. Where they differed was in their achievements: Nelson's wholly on the sea, Mountbatten's wholly on the land.

Both, too, were visionaries. Mountbatten, in his intuitive grasp of the shape of institutions in the post-war world, far back as 1942 he saw the need for a permanent inter-service command structure, but it wasn't until 1964 when he was Chief of the Defence Staff that he was at last able, and in the teeth of reactionary opposition ("We have a traitor in our midst" - Marshal of the Royal Air Force Sir Thomas Pike) to push the reforms through.

But by far his greatest achievement was his recognition that the days of the Empire were over, and we could no longer deny the aspirations of native people to govern themselves. It was this attitude, combined with his insistence on treating the leaders of subject peoples as equals, that enabled him to hand over power in India when he did and to pave the way for self-government in Burma and Indonesia: the same attitude made him so fierce an opponent of Suez. Again opposition was vociferous: that someone so rich and regal should hold such progressive views was to the old guard inconceivable; yet history has proved him right and them wrong.

In passing, I am sorry that Mr Ziegler could not find space to mention the extraordinary film *opologia pro via sua* which Lord Mountbatten completed in the 1970s and which was broadcast by the BBC in five parts after his death. Speaking directly to camera, he touched on many subjects - his own inventiveness and inflexibility, Edward VIII's last day as King, George VI's urging him to accept India - which could well have found a niche in this absorbing story.

A disquieting indictment of alleged middle bureaucracy and neglect before and since the 1982 conflict. This book will enable anyone who reads it to be not only entertained but to be singularly well informed.

An excellent production, which should be read by anyone interested in the Falkland Islands and the Antarctic.

For the facts behind the Falklands. **ANTARCTICA AND THE SOUTH ATLANTIC** Discovery, Development and Dispute Robert Fox

£12.95 from booksellers

Dalton and the decline of Labour

Richard Gott reviews 'the best political biography of recent years'

Hugh Dalton, by Ben Pimlott (Cape, £25)

THIS IS a brilliant biography of a rather moderately successful politician who, as it turns out, was also a deeply flawed human being. Although Hugh Dalton rose to become Chancellor of the Exchequer, he was in almost every way a complete disaster, loathed and mistrusted by most of those with whom he had to work.

Rebuffed by his contemporaries, derided by his colleagues, abandoned by his wife, he craved affection from a younger generation of politicians who held him in some esteem. And by bribing his way into their hearts, a Dalton fan club was created - George Brown, James Callaghan, Tony Crosland, Douglas Jay, Roy Jenkins, Bill Rodgers, and Dick Lawrence that was to reach its high point in the Wilson administration of the 1960s when he was long dead.

The shadow of Hugh Dalton still hangs over a section of the Labour Party, though the poisoned chalice of his political legacy has been handed over intact to the SDP. For he was the first great diarist of twentieth-century British political history. Dalton's name will appear in the footnotes to every book. For he was the first great diarist of Labour administrations (diaries soon to be published) and the author of voluminous and entertaining memoirs. His warts and tail, and his indiscreet revelations will continue to be seized on by historians long after his political activities have been forgotten.

And yet a mere rehash of his public life - even one as meticulous as this - would not stand up without a glimpse of the private figure. Mr Ziegler, with the riches of his disposal, gives us more than a glimpse: a man who in his relationship with his difficult, often unfaithful wife showed himself terribly vulnerable. "I wish I had some more wild oats in my youth," he wrote to Edwina in 1927, "and could excite you more than I fear I do. I wish I wasn't in the Navy and hadn't to drag you out to Malta. I wish I had an equal share of the money so that I could give you far handsomer presents. I would like to feel I was really worthy of your love."

The love he craved to give to Edwina and to receive from her, he eventually shared with his elder daughter Patricia. He fell in love with her from the moment she was born, he says, and ever after she was the emotional mainstay of his life. I have never read a letter from a father to a daughter more touching than the one he sent her one New Year's Eve and which is quoted on pages 573-4. That it came from the pen, and the heart, of the seemingly self-sufficient Mountbatten makes it all the more remarkable.

In scope and style this is an outstanding biography, informative, illuminating, strikingly just the right balance between the public and the private. It answers the right questions too. Would the masses in India have been avoided if partition had been postponed? No. Was he more to blame for Dieppe than he has ever admitted? Not much. Was he homosexual? Not in the least. Did Edwina go on to marry Nehru? She may have done, but it was not the most important part of a relationship that was enriching to all three.

In passing, I am sorry that Mr Ziegler could not find space to mention the extraordinary film *opologia pro via sua* which Lord Mountbatten completed in the 1970s and which was broadcast by the BBC in five parts after his death. Speaking directly to camera, he touched on many subjects - his own inventiveness and inflexibility, Edward VIII's last day as King, George VI's urging him to accept India - which could well have found a niche in this absorbing story.

The reader is left in no doubt that Hugh Dalton was a man of great courage, moral as well as physical, drive, imagination and leadership. Both were generous in praise, harsh in criticism; both needed not just the respect of their subordinates but their love. Where they differed was in their achievements: Nelson's wholly on the sea, Mountbatten's wholly on the land.

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But by far his greatest achievement was his recognition that the days of the Empire were over, and we could no longer deny the aspirations of native people to govern themselves. It was this attitude, combined with his insistence on treating the leaders of subject peoples as equals, that enabled him to hand over power in India when he did and to pave the way for self-government in Burma and Indonesia: the same attitude made him so fierce an opponent of Suez. Again opposition was vociferous: that someone so rich and regal should hold such progressive views was to the old guard inconceivable; yet history has proved him right and them wrong.

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An excellent production, which should be read by anyone interested in the Falkland Islands and the Antarctic.

For the facts behind the Falklands. **ANTARCTICA AND THE SOUTH ATLANTIC** Discovery, Development and Dispute Robert Fox

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But in one sense he has been unfortunate in his biographer. For although Ben Pimlott has written a brilliant subject with interest and possibly with affection, the portrait that emerges is of a disturbed, peevish and irascible man, whose judgments were often wrong, whose administrative talents were small, and whose political antennae were non-existent.

For many people, including this reviewer, who had a notion of Dalton (derived from his memoirs and his friends) as a genial upper middle class Fabian with some genuine enthusiasm for socialism and a proud record of anti-apartheid, this will come as a surprise.

But if Dalton is unfortunate in having himself thus depicted, warts and all, the reader is doubly blessed. For not only has Ben Pimlott written the best and most readable political biography of recent years, with the pace of a thriller and the atmosphere of a psychodrama, he has also shared the view of one of Churchill's aides that Dalton was "a windbag, a careerist, and a witless fool", but there is some evidence to suggest that Dalton was a man of considerable intelligence and a keen sense of the importance of the exercise of the royal prerogative of the reign.

Dalton himself was clearly bitterly disappointed. He had actually been told by Aileen to pack his bags ready to leave for Potsdam. He was not to be taken in by the fact that he had sold off some of Canon Dalton's royal gifts.

There is no proof, but if the King had taken Dalton's advice, writes Pimlott, "was undoubtedly the most important exercise of the royal prerogative of the reign."

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The Royal connection was the key to one of the most serious crises of the Labour administration. Why did Dalton change his mind and make Bevin rather than Dalton his Foreign Secretary after the war? Dalton, after all, had been a Foreign Office minister, a foreign affairs spokesman, and the boss of SOE during the war.

The answer, it now emerges more clearly than ever before, was that George VI couldn't stand him. He disliked him more than any other member of the Labour cabinet. He may well have shared the view of one of Churchill's aides that Dalton was "a windbag, a careerist, and a witless fool", but there is some evidence to suggest that Dalton was a man of considerable intelligence and a keen sense of the importance of the exercise of the royal prerogative of the reign.

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relations with the permanent officials had been disastrous. Dalton said "a thoroughly bad reputation which he was never able to repair."

And as late as September 19, he was questioning whether the time had not come "for us privately to urge the Czechs to give way rather than make a hopeless and heroic fight against overwhelming odds if they were to be deserted by all the great Powers." It was the sort of question being asked by the editor of the Times.

When in government Dalton's foreign policy was his choice of personnel, left much to be desired. At SOE he took a shine to Gladwyn Jebb - "clever, ambitious, resourceful." But when Dalton sought to create "a realistic international" to subvert occupied Europe, "most temporaries recruited by Jebb, with Dalton's acquiescence, were solicitors, businessmen and bankers of the kind of person who had previously regarded social upheaval and subversion as matters for the police."

Nor did Dalton have much enthusiasm for foreigners. He was appalled when offered the Colonial Office in 1950 - by which time the instincts of his class were as strong as ever. But his influence survived - first through Hugh Gaskin, later through his fan club, most of whom are now in the SDP, in writing an intelligent and balanced account of Dalton, therefore, Ben Pimlott has not only produced a magnificent portrait of a crucial period of Labour's long decline, he has also helped to illuminate the problems of the present.

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moment of relative success. Dalton had some radical ideas but it was not an easy time for him, being lashed on by the incorrigibly bourgeois Keynes and his many Liberal acolytes in the Treasury. But here, as in other posts, the flaws in Dalton's personality led too often to his not getting his own way - neither with his civil servants nor his political colleagues. His policies were unenthusiastically received, his warnings disregarded. When, as a professional economist, he should have been at his most knowledgeable and persuasive, he was at his most ineffective.

When he was forced to resign over the famous Budget leak in 1947, his radical policies had already collapsed. "Dalton's mishap seemed strangely preordained: not a ludicrous intervention but a culmination, a ritual offering, a declaration that a different season had begun."

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Today in London a major conference discusses the most controversial branch of gynaecology — in vitro fertilisation. Suzanne Lowry puts the case for allowing the new technologies of conception to develop within the usual bounds of medical ethics, and finds it ironic that abortion's most dedicated opponents are now trying to deny help to women who want children

In defence of the little miracles of the test tube

CONTRACEPTION and abortion were the hot moral issues of the Sixties and Seventies. Infertility and when the Warlock Report delicately called "assisted reproduction" have taken over in the Eighties. How ironic that officiously striving to procreate now seems to pose as much of an ethical dilemma as the unwanted pregnancies did before. The whole so-called "life" argument has been neatly stood on its head in course of post-coital action sometimes recommended to infertile women "to help the sperm swim better."

Today at a major conference at Imperial College, London, Patrick Steptoe and Dr Robert Edwards, the lords of the test tube, will take the platform alongside other grandees of what is rapidly becoming the most controversial branch of gynaecology. (Notwithstanding that around half infertile people are men, infertility is still largely categorized as a "woman's complaint.")

The conference is jointly sponsored by Serravallo, a pharmaceutical company which makes fertility drugs, the British Fertility Society, a doctors' group, and the National Association for the Childless (NAC), an organisation representing the increasingly vocal patients' lobby. All these are in their different ways, and to differing degrees, committed "to assist" those couples — some say as many as one in seven — who cannot have babies "naturally."

Their discussions take place against the background of an increasingly tangled and even hostile moral forest that is springing up around the sleeping beauty of infertility. The DHSS has not yet published guidelines in response to Enoch Powell's bill which seeks to stop all research involving human embryos in vitro and otherwise ex nihilo. We have the government's newly announced proposals to ban "commercial" surrogacy. And all the while a burgeoning lobby, which, with sickening obviousness, is composed of just those people who were most ferocious in the anti-abortion "cause." They have taken up their high-minded, low-aiming cudgels to oppose assisted reproduction in just the same manner and tone of voice in which they opposed assisted contraception.

Their antipathy does not just apply to half-fantasies about a brave new world of cloning, frozen embryos and genetic engineering (although fostering alarmism about such things is part of their weaponry) but is directed also towards such old-fashioned methods as AID, and of course its direct counterpart, womb-lending or leasing. To these moralists, it seems, only what takes place between individuals and without medical interference in the privacy of their own, preferably nuptial, bedroom, can result in acceptable conception. Never mind whether the intercourse is tender, brutal or simply unthinkably other more considered or contrived roads to parenthood are suspect at best and evil at worst.

Of course, undeniably, reproduction and the urge towards or against it sits at the very centre of human experience. Any adult's attitude to fertility will, when honestly announced, betray his or her view of self and of the wider world. And to those who wish to affirm their fertility, whether to give their lives a focus of optimism and love, or to stretch an arm towards the future, or to cement a love relationship or even to get an heir for a fortune, the discovery that the potential "doesn't work" can be devastating indeed.

"Normality" fades, the future withers, dreams die. People may be left with a feeling of incurable isolation and failure, a sense of stigma, or of being dully incarcerated within their own bodies, suddenly little more than walking graves of children never born. The worst punishment may be that infertile people, women in particular, who continue to pursue a hope of parenthood against the odds are categorized as "desperate" or "slightly dotty."

To comprehend this "dottiness" you have to remember that fertility is not only an individual's private concern, but also at the heart of society's self-image. In Sparta no doubt the wailing of babies on the hillside must have seemed "justified" by the need for a strong, warlike state. Likewise heroine's badges for mothers often may seem appropriate in a Russia in need of population replenishment, or a one-child-policy vital in a China facing population explosion.

In our society, for better or worse, baby making has been and is inextricably enmeshed in our notions of free choice and True Love. Indeed the value of a good and enduring sexual and emotional association between two people, with a child or children to crown it is the only idealism we have that cuts across class, economic, political, and educational divisions.



Frances Young with Arthur — pictures by Don McPherson

Face to face with Arthur

Once she doubted the worth of her handicapped son's life: now she has come to rejoice in him. Frances Young tells Martyn Halsall of the revelation that changed her life

ARTHUR YOUNG is the world's least likely theological research assistant. Both his parents are university lecturers, but Arthur will never read nor write. His spoken vocabulary is limited largely to the repetition of prompted sounds. He has to be fed and wears nappies. He is nearly 18 years old.

His mother is the Rev. Dr Frances Young, a lecturer in New Testament studies at the University of Birmingham for the past 11 years. With other radical theologians she came to public notice with the publication of *The Myth of God Incarnate*. Her academic reputation is founded on research on the early Greek fathers of the Church. "From the New Testament to the Council of Chalcedon in 451," she said with typical precision. Her latest book, the cover proclaims, was written "with assistance from Arthur." This classification for the library catalogue puts it more starkly: "Young, Frances: *Face to Face* — Handicapped — Christianity."

When discussing the possibility of ordination into the Methodist Church she was asked how Arthur would affect her understanding of ministry. "He is part of my life," she replied. "He talks of other 'theological' pilgrimage, a spiritual journey to the boundaries of belief, and back to Christian belief, and back to Christ. It proved an expedition into the mind of a God who had created her son with such incomplete mental and physical powers."

It was also an expedition fraught with paradox. Her husband, Bob, was supportive about her work and ordained, but remains agnostic about her faith; Arthur proved a problem and a passport, sharing the burden of his suffering while giving hope.

On the night before Frances began her book, in March 1984, Arthur stood unsupported for the first time. When we met him he was tottering on the sofa, contributing to the joys of his life. One of the joys of his life is watching trees; another is music. His favourite church is St. Andrew's, where the music is loud and lively and his own uncoordinated contributions are likely to melt into the fervent forest of spontaneous Hallelujahs.

"He challenged the typical answers to the problem," said Frances directly. "As a result of the questions raised through that challenge, I began to see things in Biblical material which I had not seen before. The liberal theologians tend to gloss over the idea of the love of God that they have revealed to us over other Biblical revelations, particularly those of divine wrath and judgment often highlighted by evangelical Christians, she said."

But it was these aspects which leapt to the fore during life with Arthur. They introduced the darker side of theological experience, which at times threatened to overwhelm her. "It was one thing to accept Arthur," she said, "but it was another to come to terms with the great suffering and tragedy below him. This seemed to resist all attempts at justification. The problem of believing in a good God in the face of the tragedy and evil of the world was posed in a sharper way than ever before."

The tragedy was not so much Arthur as my sense of abandonment, my inability to accept the existence and love of God at those deeper levels where it makes a real difference to one's life. I could still make a Christian confession; I still preached from time to time, and often found that Wesley's advice, "Preach faith till you've got it come true — that was when I was giving to others — and only then — that I had to give."

Frances was married in Methodist. She was the granddaughter of ministers and both her parents preceded her into the pulpit as local preachers. But the route to deeper faith, for all her intellectual agonising, led down largely practical paths. They included the sharing of experiences with a sympathetic group and recognising the link between doubt and underlying emotional stress. They also included the

Crime novelist P D James has turned to the stage after nine novels. A clue to the future, asks Lesley Grant-Adamson, or just a red herring?

Playing it Phyllis's way

ON STAGE at Watford, Suzanne Young is a character called Clara. Clara is a Ponting-grade civil servant, she used to have an older lover and now she has a younger husband. She has a typewriter, a car, a house, a maid, a dog, a cat, a garden, a pause, a flick of an eye tell the audience which loyalty troubles her.

In rehearsal there was discussion with the director, Leon Rubin, about a certain line. If it's done like this, it could mean Clara's thinking of that, but Phyllis said Clara wouldn't have known about it. The line was tried again, Phyllis's way.

Phyllis is better known as P. D. James, the crime novelist who made the genre respectable again after it had sunk to mediocrity. Readers who still turn up their noses at tales of detection cannot have discovered P. D. James, although they might well have met her policeman, Adam Dalgleish, on television or her private eye, Cordelia Gray, at the cinema. Now, after nine novels, she is on the stage for the first time, at the Palace Theatre, Watford, until April 8. It is not what the clues might lead one to expect: it is not a detective story.

There is intrigue, but the crux of the play is the relationship between Clara and her two men. She lives by her intellect, her husband by his emotions. P. D. James, although she might well have met her policeman, Adam Dalgleish, on television or her private eye, Cordelia Gray, at the cinema. Now, after nine novels, she is on the stage for the first time, at the Palace Theatre, Watford, until April 8. It is not what the clues might lead one to expect: it is not a detective story.

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P. D. James

has news of an offer of work at a United States university. The offer is not instantly appealing because P. D. James has only recently returned from a stint "teaching the mystery" at Boston. She interpreted that to mean a few technical points and an appreciation of detective fiction from Wilkie Collins through "the golden age" of Dorothy Sayers and up to present day.

Certainly her students discovered that she dislikes television violence, rejects the gun, guts and gore of Chandler and Hammett in favour of the malice domestic of Marjorie Allingham, Sayers, and Ngaio Marsh, and she dismisses Agatha Christie as a literary conjurer rather than a novelist.

However, an upswing in the popularity of detective fiction has had publishers restoring books whose own authors had almost forgotten them, and cinema and television have joined the search for good material. Cordelia Gray has gone to the cinema with *An Unsuitable Job For A Woman*, and Roy Marsden has become Dalgleish for television viewers in a series of series beginning with *Death Of An Expert Witness* (set in a pathology laboratory) and *Shroud For A Nightingale*. Dalgleish's creation, although she is ready to concede that Marsden's man may be less cold and troubled.

WIN £300 WORTH OF CLOTHES

For those of you who missed it (or found it impossible) the first time around, here's another chance to enter Brenda Polan's competition. The questions are different but the answer remains the same. Entries will be judged on the best score out of 10. So don't worry if you can't answer all the questions — have a go. The prize is an expenses paid trip to London on April 10, lunch in the Guardian restaurant, the afternoon at Dickens & Jones putting together a wardrobe worth £300, tickets for a London show and overnight accommodation at a top hotel. The winner will spend the following day with us at The Guardian special day at Dickens & Jones (see Personal Page for details), and must be bold enough to take a quick twirl on the runway to show off her new outfit. There will also be an extra prize of a basket of cosmetics in new spring colours from Estee Lauder. Plus some White Linnen scent.

1. The store group which includes Dickens & Jones may be about to acquire a more exotic flavour. Which is it?
2. They have bags of it: in fact they are positively boastful and ultra-chic even if they do display their wares in Camden. Which trendy trio of fashion designers are they?
3. Each season she adds to her knitted zoo. Who is the Italian lady designer with the alternative name and a 30-year track record plus a scent that sounds like Kaffeekeise?
4. What, they asked in their ad campaign, was next? What was the Burton Group's first and foremost answer?
5. It ain't cheaper, but it's certainly spiky. Which London retailer (not a department store) has more famous names in stock than any other?
6. Which British designer invented the crumpled look, and was named Most Influential Designer in 1984, wears her heart on her T-shirt and has squeezed nearly everyone else out of Joseph's Chinese Laundry shop to South Molton Street?
7. So who decided to answer Burton back with a swift move into menswear? It was, quite logically, what came after.
8. Last year Bath Museum's costume department put the work of three women and one man in one glass case. For business purposes they only have three names between them but together, their work summed up fashion's most important directions in 1984. They are all British. Name as many as you can.
9. Which British actress hitches it beautifully, if you discount her city manner, in Nolan Miller's extravagantly wacky clothes. On home ground she prefers to jet-set in Bruce Oldfield's clothes.
10. The angust royal couple after whom the building was named might not have been amused but below stairs there are no taboos against confusing fashion and art. Which small and, to quote a colleague, huggable fashion designer is currently exhibiting a mixture of oriental and occidental ideas?

Don't forget to sum up in not more than 50 words the kind of outfit you would look for and why.

The answers should be sent to Anna Groves (Fashion Competition), Promotion Department, The Guardian, 119 Farringdon Road, London EC1R 3ER. Needless to say, the competition is not open to employees of the Guardian and Manchester Evening News plc, or of Dickens & Jones.

Closing date for entries is 22 March, 1985.

THE GUARDIAN
at
Dickens & Jones
Regent Street, W1

New bank tax would be a politically painless way for Lawson to raise funds



NOTEBOOK

Edited by
Hamish McRae

IT LOOKS very much as though the Chancellor will clobber the banks again in his budget next Tuesday.

The chosen method of raising more revenue from the financial sector is not yet

clear, but the intention is. The Treasury is known to have looked at different varieties of a financial services tax.

One option is to introduce the levy on consumer credit, originally planned for last year's budget, but dropped when it was appreciated in the Treasury that the banks would suffer greatly from the more general changes in company taxation. In the event they had to write off some £2 billion of anticipated tax credits from their reserves, and have spent the year repairing their capital base.

Most of the banks have now done this and all have reported very large increases in domestic profits. Aside from raising quite substantial additional revenue, a levy on consumer credit would tend to curb one of the main reasons for the rise in interest rates. Alternatively, it could be used to blunt the impact on bank lending of the expected mod-

est fall in the interest rates which should be hastened by the budget next week.

The Treasury is known to be worried about the rapid continued growth of bank lending, because of its adverse effect on money supply.

A second option would be to introduce a VAT-style tax on financial services. There are a number of practical difficulties in such a move, but in political terms this could be presented as a widening of the VAT net, and a more palatable one than extending VAT to, say, children's clothes.

A further option would be to increase the revenue from the financial sector as part of a more general change in securities market taxation. Stamp duty, already halved in last year's budget, might be replaced by a turnover tax on security trading. Changes in securities market taxation could take place parallel to changes in bank taxation.

The attraction of getting more money from the banking sector is that it is a less emotive issue than taxation, say, of pension funds. Any appropriation generated in the city by new taxes could be offset by other concessions, most probably on capital gains tax.

If the Chancellor does indeed impose a new tax on the banks it will mean that the pleas of Sir Jeremy Morse, chairman of Lloyds Bank, have failed. Sir Jeremy, in his role as chairman of the British Bankers' Association, recently wrote to the Chancellor to try to persuade him not to increase taxation on the banks.

Bear farm

IS THE great farm land boom at an end? For more than a decade, investing in agricultural land has proved safe, sound, sometimes even spectacular. EEC subsidies and technological advances have combined to push farm-

ing profitability and accordingly land values to record levels. In the 1950s a farmer with 10,000 acres was a millionaire. Now one with only 500 acres is a millionaire.

But now the investment market looks set for a depressed period, with yields from existing investment land rising only slowly, and capital values actually falling.

"Do not buy farmland at the present time unless there are exceptionally special circumstances," says Agricultural Investment Services in its latest bulletin sent to investors. "Ninety-nine per cent of farms in Britain should be avoided."

Only prime quality land, preferably the rich silt of Lincolnshire, should be considered a good investment at present, and this only because it is ideal for growing vegetables, and they are not covered by an EEC price regime.

All the commodities whose prices are supported from Brussels have either suffered

badly in the past year (dairy produce) or are confidently expected to be hit in the 1985 price fixing (cereals and sugar beet).

Government grants for farm improvements have already been cut, and the power of the conservation lobby, which seeks to reduce farm output, is still growing.

As Farmland Market, a publication which surveys land prices for the industry, said last week: "There is a clear feeling among institutional investors that land's recent record, in terms of both income and capital growth, just cannot be maintained."

Vain hope

ANOTHER of our revolutionary hopes has died. We had innocently assumed that the arrival of cellular radio for car phones would lead to a rapid reform of British Telecom's directory inquiry services, both under-staffed

and under-automated for years.

The theory was that BT had not received enough indignation from business simply because most managers, sitting at their desks, left that chore to their secretaries. Come an expansion in the use of car phones, and bingo...

No such thing. Both the cellular radio operators — Cellnet, in which BT itself is involved, as well as the competing Racal company — have been too busy to use the BT service. Instead, they have bought the microfiche records of BT directories so that they can provide sharper answers themselves.

In a masochistic exercise yesterday, we rang BT's directory inquiries to get Cellnet's number. We got the engaged tone twice. When it did, we waited one minute, three seconds. After the reply it took 27 seconds to get the number.

Now if we had a cellular car phone handy, we could have conducted a controlled experiment...

Q and A

WITHE answers supplied by the CSO's Economic Trends, last yesterday. Budget question time.

Q1: Has the share of national income going to taxes and social security contributions risen or fallen since the Conservative victory in 1979?

A: Risen. It went from 38.1 in 1979 to 45.3 in 1982, the latest firm figure.

Q2: Are our income tax and social security receipts proportionately high or low by international standards?

A: Low. We were number eight in the league table of countries with a share of 30 per cent, against 38 per cent in 1977.

Q3: Are our companies unduly clobbered for cash?

A: Yes. The 10 per cent of revenue supplied by them was exceeded only by Japan and Australia.

The restaurants' performance mirrored a 25 per cent improvement in the UK businesses as a whole. A combination of higher sales volumes, helped by new products and more efficient production, in 1984 led to a 24.5 million in the UK.

Shareholders' funds beat forecasts

Dunlop 'recovering' after £88m loss

By Margaret Pagano, City Correspondent

Dunlop revealed the full extent of its wounds yesterday with an estimate that the total loss for 1984 was £88 million. But the key factor to emerge from the financial details was that at the end of 1984 shareholders' funds stood at £53 million, or 40p a Dunlop share. This is far higher than all previous forecasts, which had been in the £20 million to £30 million range.

This is believed to have been the crucial information which pushed BTR's chief, Sir Owen Green, into rebelling his offer to £101 million last week. The figures also show preference shares worth £15 million, bringing Dunlop's assets to £73 million. Dunlop's shares yesterday firmed at 1p to 67p.

Sir Michael Edwards, the Dunlop chairman of four months, who finally capitulated to Sir Owen's offer, said the figures demonstrated that Dunlop was on a recovery path. "After four months of intensive reorganisation, and having drawn up our strategic plan, your board is satisfied that Dunlop is well on the road to recovery," he said. His blessing for the BTR offer came with

BTR's offer document setting out terms of the 66p share offer. BTR is offering 63p cash a share.

The £88 million loss is mainly made up of the £72 million extraordinary item which includes the write down of Dunlop's US tyre business which it planned to sell off for \$110 million in a management buyout. BTR is urgently considering whether it should consider this plan and hopes to decide over the next few days.

Dunlop's borrowings are also shown to be in a healthier position than previously forecast. Present debt stands at £530 million, but after stripping out £113 million and £135 million for investments and disposals which have been made over the last few weeks, the debt is slashed to about £300 million. The sale of the US business would cut debt by £180 million in total.

Although the Dunlop team believed that it could bring the group back to health it is understood to have realised that it did not have the resources to back up such a high risk reconstruction without a major reconstruction or the backing of a group like BTR.

Sir Michael described 1985 as a "transitional" year for Dunlop, which should have improved margins and profits. "Sir Owen was convinced by the strength and logic of these arguments and the inherent value of Dunlop to BTR," he said. Dunlop's potential for losses, which are believed well over £200 million, are to be another factor which may have swayed Sir Owen to increase his offer. It is still not known how much of the losses are usable.

Dunlop said yesterday that no agreement had yet been reached over compensation for Sir Michael and his two colleagues brought in from ICI, Mr Robin Biggam and Mr Roger Holmes. Sir Michael was on a contract of £156,000 a year for three years and indicated last week that he would not expect to receive the full face-value in compensation payment.

BTR stressed that Dunlop's prospects are healthy. Sir Owen said that with BTR's retained profits and investment proceeds from Dunlop he expected that gearing for 1985 will be significantly below 100 per cent.

BAe sale to get BT-style push

By Michael Smith, Industrial Editor

A MINI-British Telecom style sales operation is to be mobilised to help launch a successful £500 million sale of British Aerospace shares in May.

The £500 million share sale will involve the £350 million disposal of the Government's 48 per cent stake in BAe and the company itself raising around £150 million through a special offer of new shares.

The sale is expected to



Sir Austin Pearce, Chairman of BAe

take place early in May and will involve the shares being sold in two instalments to improve the attraction of the deal.

Ahead of the twin-sale, government and BAe financial advisers intend to launch a nationwide campaign to increase awareness of the company and the attraction of the sale. While it is hoped to attract small shareholders to the issue, it is accepted that BAe, Europe's largest aerospace company, will appeal more to the financial institutions.

The £350 million government sale will mean that the State has unloaded its entire stake in the country's biggest aerospace firm. However the Government will retain a "golden share" to ensure that the company is never taken over by a foreign concern.

While the publicity campaign will not match the scale of the BT extravaganza, it is likely to arouse fresh controversy among critics of government policy who are opposed to the denationalisation.

United in cookie war cash call

By Mary Brasler

United Biscuits yesterday called on its shareholders for £88 million of new funds with which to fight a cookie war in the US.

The outlook for the group is encouraging for 1985, Sir Hector said. "In the UK a strong operating performance is expected. The US results from Keelbar will depend on the intensity and duration of the 'cookie war', but its market share gains in 1984 are an encouraging indication for the future."

The battle between the major manufacturers to dominate the soft cookie market in the US—a battle that was started by Procter & Gamble in 1963—has left its scars on US profits. Keelbar's contribution fell by 25 per cent in dollar terms to come through

at \$2.5 million. Limiting the group's overall profit improvement to 5 per cent.

Sir Hector said Keelbar was now bidding with new products which have captured over 30 per cent of the soft cookie market to become the brand leader. The company's share of the total cookie market grew by 1.3 per cent last year but at the cost of a near 3 per cent cut in margins. "The bottom line was bad," Sir Hector admitted, "but it is important to us to come through with a higher market share."

The US has swallowed \$100 million in the past five years out of a capital spending budget which is running at an annual rate of well over \$100 million. Spending on fast food res-

taurants—mainly Wimpy and Pizzaloo—accelerated to £23 million last year but paid off with profits up by 84 per cent to £7 million.

Sir Hector is now looking to new outlets for the hamburger empire. Delhi is already munching its way through Wimpys, and Indonesia is next on the expansion list. US Restaurants is adding takeaway pizza outlets to its menu with the acquisition last October of the Perfect Pizza chain.

The restaurants' performance mirrored a 25 per cent improvement in the UK businesses as a whole. A combination of higher sales volumes, helped by new products and more efficient production, in 1984 led to a 24.5 million in the UK.

DTI disarray over Fraser bid

By Geoffrey Gibbs

The £500 million Egyptian takeover bid for the House of Fraser has produced disarray in Whitehall as the Trade and Industry Secretary Mr Norman Tebbit ponders whether the acquisition should be referred to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission for investigation.

The DTI had hoped to make an announcement on the agreed bid from the privately-owned Al Fayed Investment and Trust company by the middle of the week.

But a formal ruling has now been held back to Friday. This follows what is understood to have been an acrimonious meeting with the chairman and directors of Mr Tiny Rowland's Lloyds bank, which has now been taken over by the Egyptian bid.

Their financial advisers Kleinwort Benson have since topped up the holding by picking up a further 0.4 per cent of Fraser's shares in the stock market for £2.6 million.

Those with long years of DTI experience dealing with

pressed its argument for the Al Fayed bid to be referred. Mr Tebbit's response was that the Fraser bid was under-estimated to have been dismissive but there was yesterday no sign that he has yet firmly decided whether or not to give a green light to a takeover of Fraser by the Egyptian bid.

The Al Fayed brothers, whose assets include the Paris Ritz hotel and a 600-year-old castle in Rosshire, tightened their hold on Fraser earlier this week with a £130 million share buyback which took their holding above the 51 per cent mark.

Those with long years of DTI experience dealing with

merger issues say they have never known anything like it. A decision on the Al Fayed bid comes at a sensitive time politically. The Egyptian President is due to arrive in London this morning for a two-day visit that includes talks with Mrs Thatcher, Mr Tebbit and the Secretary of State, Mr Michael Heseltine. Tonight he will attend a small dinner at 10 Downing Street to which Mr Mohamed Al Fayed has also been invited.

House of Fraser shares slipped further below the 400p mark yesterday as the stock market awaited a final ruling on the Egyptian bid, ending the day 4p lower on balance at 388p.

● Lloyds shares edged up 2p to 171p on news that Mr Rowland has further increased his shareholding in the business. He now has a 17.44 per cent stake valued at £78.66 million at current stock market prices.

Cable report unlikely to be published

By our Technology Correspondent

The report to Mrs Thatcher on why the cable revolution did not happen is unlikely to be published. Even if it is, it will be in an edited version, the Cabinet Office said yesterday.

The report, from the Prime Minister's six-man Information Technology Advisory Panel (ITAP), puts a lot of the blame on the Chancellor's decision to phase out capital allowances, in direct contradiction of the Industry Department's

pump-priming of new hi-tech development.

ITAP itself began the rewiring-Britain campaign three years ago. Its report in January 1983 — adopted by the government in all its essentials — envisaged Britain heading the rest of Europe in a market for private enterprise.

One consultancy has even estimated that Britain will have 10 million cable TV sets by 1990. The theory was that market forces would be sufficient to establish that "national grid,"

which would build from a TV entertainment base into providing the home computer services of the future.

Instead, it now looks as though the UK could be one of the laggards of Europe in establishing this cornerstone of the post-industrial economy.

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Lloyds package to woo the wealthy

By Margaret Dibben, Money Editor

Wealthy customers of Lloyds Bank are being offered an automatic £10,000 overdraft, a £5,000 Access limit, £300-a-day from a cash machine, and free banking even if they are overdrawn.

At the end of next month, the bank is launching two investment services giving customers who have at least £35,000 in cash and shares a

current account linked to an investment account which pays 13.25 per cent gross on £2,500 or more and an automatic sweep to transfer funds between the two accounts.

This is the first of the large high street banks to move into financial packaging at the top end of the market.

Customers can choose whether they wish to give their own investment instructions with a Portfolio Adminis-

tration Service or rely on Lloyds' staff to handle the decisions for them with the Investment Management Service.

The first costs £25 a quarter plus 50p a month holding charge and a dealing charge of £5 for each transaction, all plus VAT. The second has the same quarterly charge and an annual percentage charge on the value of the portfolio, cheaper if your money is in Lloyds Bank products.

Sears' £114m agreed bid for Fosters

By Margaret Pagano, City Correspondent

The giant Sears retailing chain emerged yesterday as the expected white knight to sweep the takeover of Fosters clothing chain off its feet with an agreed £114 million bid.

The takeover for Fosters' string of 750 shops easily tops last month's bitterly contested £83 million bid from Ward White, the shoe to motor components group.

Sears, which owns Selfridges, most of the country's shoe shops, and the William Hill betting shop, first approached the Fosters board just a week ago, although it had looked at the group for a long time. The last few days have been spent bargaining over an agreed price to get board approval.

Mr Geoffrey Maitland Smith, Sears' chief executive, admitted yesterday that it was a "full but fair price."

Sears, which owns 1.3 per cent of Fosters, is offering new shares for eight Fosters shares, valuing Fosters shares at 227p each. A cash offer, worth £106 million, gives shareholders 210p cash per Fosters share.

Fosters, which employs 4,200 people, runs 550 menswear and boyswear shops, including the up-market Dornie and Esquire outlets. Sears plans to completely revamp and modernise the chain to create shops for

BT share questions

By Margaret Pagano, City Correspondent

Mr Norman Tebbit, the Trade and Industry Secretary, is to be questioned about alleged share dealing by the merchant bank Kleinwort Benson, during the sale of British Telecom.

Mr Bryan Gould, the Shadow Trade Secretary, has tabled two parliamentary questions asking the minister if he took any action to stop the bank dealing in BT shares. During the flotation of BT last November, Kleinwort was the merchant bank handling the sale on behalf of the Department of Trade.

In the questions, tabled yesterday, Mr Gould said: "I have been told by a thoroughly reliable informant that Kleinwort Benson, appointed by the Government to help arrange the sale of British Telecom, actually dealt in the shares."

Kleinwort Benson's vice-chairman, Lord Limerick, rejected the allegation, saying: "You cannot deal in shares before they are quoted."

Mr Gould also asked Mr Tebbit whether the Government's fee to Kleinwort — put at about £4 million — had been reduced to take account of any profits Kleinwort made from share dealing.

Kleinwort said on Tuesday that it managed only to break even on the work it carried out for the Government.

Russians set to join Intelsat

From Michael White

The Soviet Union is poised to sign an agreement to join Intelsat, the international satellite consortium, and thus end its years of isolation from advanced western technology in this field, according to reports in Washington.

Though the United States is the biggest user of the Intelsat system and at the forefront of its technology, it does not control the 109-country system which provides two-thirds of all international telephone traffic—including the White House-Kremlin hot line and most international television transmission. But fears are being expressed here that the US would have to make sure it "keep the

Soviets out of our technological pants if, as expected, a deal is signed in Moscow within a matter of weeks.

The Russians run a rival system, Intersputnik, and their declared willingness to join forces with Intelsat inside two years is seen as an admission that Soviet technology is lagging. None of the eastern bloc states belongs to the Western system, with the borderline exception of Yugoslavia, and vice-versa.

Intelsat sources here have been quoted as envisaging a possible merger between the two systems with common ownership and operations.

A quite separate debate has been going on at congressional hearings in the US as a result of the pending decision of the

Federal Communications Commission (FCC) on applications by five American companies to introduce competition with their own international satellite services — a move which has been likened to the deregulation of AT&T, the giant telephone monopoly. The five are Orion Satellite, RCA American Communications, International Satellite Inc. Cygnus and Panamsat, most of whom are interested in the big North Atlantic market.

One of the arguments deployed against such a move is that it might signal a weakening of US commitment to Intelsat and encourage Third World countries to turn to Intersputnik for the services used by 170 countries and territories. Supporters of the pro-

posed deal between the two systems dismiss the notion that the Soviets would "take over" as a red herring, and technical factors would favour direct Soviet TV broadcasting to the West, though some countries already have access to the Soviet signal.

There is no military dimension as such as the US has its own parallel network for military communications, though some have argued that the link-up might enable the Soviet Union to improve its military communications.

What is unclear is how the political implications of greater access to the information technology explosion, given the tight rein kept on domestic in-

Cement-Roadstone

PROFITS MORE THAN DOUBLED

	Year to 31 December 1984	Year to 31 December 1983	Increase
Sales	IRE476.3m	IRE454.0m	+ 4.9%
Pre-tax Profit	IRE 20.1m	IRE 9.1m	+120.9%
Earnings per Share	8.11p	4.05p	+100.2%
Dividend per Share (Net)	2.70p	2.4366p	+ 10.8%

"Trading Profit in the U.S. was more than three times that of 1983 and more than one third of total Group Trading Profit."

"We are now well based geographically in fruitful markets. When the turnaround comes in the Irish market the pace of our progress will take a further welcome surge. In the meantime, group prospects look good."

Cement-Roadstone Holdings Plc

The largest industrial company in Ireland with substantial international interests

Geoffrey Maitland Smith

men akin to its high fashion Miss Selfridge shops for women.

But Foster's chain of 29 women's fashion shops, Peter Richards, will either be converted into Miss Selfridge shops, or closed.

Sears aims to keep intact the 60 Mallett's camping and leisure shops, which are in with its own Olympus and Supersport shops. The profitable chain of 90 Adam children's wear shops will also be kept running but Foster's carpet business is likely to be sold-off to the present management.

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552 من الاربعين

The trade war peril in US hitech controls

An EEC report calls on member countries to adopt a united front in the face of Washington's curbs on exports. Geoff Andrews reports

COMMON Market countries are urged to stand together against the imposition by the United States of export controls on high technology that threaten a trade war with Europe, according to a confidential report to an EEC committee.

A second report, which should have been published by the Industrial Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, has been suppressed after pressure from Washington because it calls the US controls "naïve" and says that only the Soviet bloc and Japan will benefit in the long run.

The EEC report, to the economic and industrial policy committee, states: "The Community cannot accept a US trade policy, prompted by specific political ends and in some respects contrary to international law... if that

policy jeopardises the future of the European economy."

The controls threatened the unity and independence of European firms. "It is increasingly apparent that under the guise of foreign policy, the USA is seeking to protect its dominant position vis-à-vis the Community in advanced technological sectors."

For example, in the field of products with dual civil and military use, it is difficult to know whether the controls on exports are intended to widen the technological gap with the Community countries or with the USA's Western trading partners.

The confidential report, which is at present open to draft form and will not be discussed until the summer, points out that Western Europe accounts for 80 per cent of OECD trade with the

East, compared with only 3 per cent from the US. "The Community economy has suffered an undeniable loss of activity."

The US Activity reflected a "disturbing increase in US protectionism." The report seeks joint action to prevent escalation into a full-blown trade war together with an EEC-funded programme to make up the gap in technology and information that the US controls have opened up.

The OECD report is a sustained and vitriolic attack on the controls imposed on Europe from the United States, which has been stifled after pressure from Washington and will not now be published.

Sources quoted in today's edition of Computer News, say that all attempts to get the matter of high technology export controls raised in

the OECD council have been silenced by the US on security grounds. The source is quoted as saying: "The US has picked off all its critics one by one. Eighteen months ago the UK was one of the agitators on the issue. Now the UK won't even admit that it ever raised the topic."

The 58-page report, The Sisyphus Syndrome, by Dr Stuart Macdonald of the University of Queensland, concludes that the all-embracing system of controls erected by the US Department of Commerce and the Pentagon, are being operated "with all the finesse and subtlety that one might expect from an apprentice butcher" despite the fact that export controls touch the heart and circulation system of high technology.

He suggests that the long-term damage will afflict US

companies as much as the European manufacturers who are most constrained by the system at the moment, because of the strangulation of their information system.

Among the beneficiaries would be Japan, "with information channels of her own careful creation," and some of the developing Asian nations who were adaptable and enterprising in their search for information. But keeping the sting in the tail, Dr Macdonald adds two final sentences at the very end of his conclusions which must have gone a long way to ensuring the report would never be published.

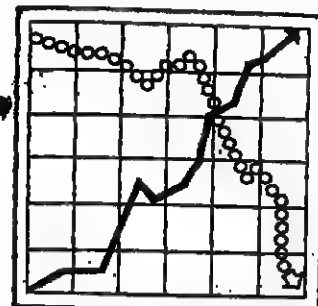
"That region most likely to improve its lot is the region which has had most experience and has proved most resourceful in procuring and handling copious amounts of high technology

information flowing through information channels. The Soviet bloc promises to be the main beneficiary from US controls on the export of high technology."

Already Spencer Batiste, the Conservative MP for Elmst, who has been campaigning against the controls ever since a company in his constituency was crippled by their impact, has put down a question to the Trade Secretary asking that a copy of the report should be acquired for the House of Commons library.

Although the OECD normally publishes its reports widely, a spokesman at the organisation's Paris headquarters said that the report, which was delivered about ten days ago, would not be published although it would be used as an internal document.

Why the budget is important for the unemployed



ECONOMICS
Christopher Huhne

THE speculation about Tuesday's budget has centred on rather narrow issues of tax reform or marginal changes in borrowing and its uses.

Given the Government's slow, if not exactly stately, progress towards pragmatism, the narrowness of debate is hardly surprising. Most City analysts are hardly bothered about examining things that are unlikely to happen. But no one should be left in any doubt that the spectrum of debate falls lamentably to encompass the potential issues which a Chancellor, faced with sluggish non-oil output growth and an historically high unemployment rate should be addressing.

The British economy still has a large problem of unused resources of both man-power and machinery which the Chancellor could, were he so minded, do something to tackle next Tuesday. The balance of government revenue and spending is a key influence on the economy if only because of its size, state

'Common sense tells us that if the government raises taxes, it takes spending power out of the economy'

spending including transfer payments like social security amounted, on EEC definitions, to nearly 45 per cent of national income last year, while revenue accounted for nearly 42 per cent. The difference between the two is its budget deficit.

Common sense tells us that if the Government raises taxes, it takes spending power out of the economy, which is likely to depress output unless there is an (unlikely) corresponding fall in prices and costs.

Similarly, spending cuts by the Government cut someone's income—whether that of civil servants or town hall cleaning contractors—and thus reduce purchasing power and output. A summary of both sides of the account is of course provided by changes in the budget deficit.

The crude change in the budget deficit, however, is an inadequate indicator of what the Government has been up to, because its own policy actions are not the

only influence on it. If there is a world boom, government revenues will tend to rise and its spending on transfer payments such as unemployment benefit will fall; the deficit will fall but that would not suggest any change of policy by the Government.

More pertinently, a fall in the deficit may understate the restrictiveness of government tax rises and spending cuts if other factors have been pushing the deficit up: this is broadly what has happened since 1979 when the second-round effects on demand of the government's own restrictive policies and of the world recession succeeded in pushing up social security spending and reducing tax revenues below what they would otherwise have been.

It is therefore crucial to adjust the crude deficit for such effects in order to identify the Government's influence. It is also crucial to adjust the deficit for interest payments on the Government's debt to the extent that these are merely compensation for the erosion of the value of that debt by inflation.

This inflation adjustment is important for two reasons: if it was not done, the ratio of government debt to national income would fall, which should rightly be seen as a result of policy rather than a natural outcome. Secondly, if the real value of people's assets—in this case government debt—falls, they generally attempt to recoup it by saving more. They thus spend less and demand falls.

Both the cyclical and the inflation adjustments for all the major economies have recently been done by the Paris-based inter-governmental club, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD Economic Studies No 3, Autumn 1984). The results for Britain strongly underline the potency of government tax and spending policy in determining growth—and hence employment.

The graph shows the changes in this "structural" budget deficit or surplus for Britain, plotted against the changes in national income, and emphasises more starkly than any amount of words from the just how important what the Chancellor does—or does not—do on Tuesday will be.

The tightness of Britain's budgetary policy—we were running a structural surplus of revenue over spending last year worth 1.8 per cent of national income—largely accounts for the failure of the British non-oil economy to generate enough jobs to cut unemployment.

Some attempts to make these kind of adjustments have been criticised because the Government's favourite measure of the budget deficit—the Public Sector Borrowing Requirement—is now so addled with fiddles that it can give a misleading picture of what is happening to policy. Clearly, a reduction in the PBSR through selling state assets will have less demand effect than an equivalent rise in taxation.

Similarly, bringing forward

VAT on imports last year will probably not have had much effect in cutting demand though it certainly helped to cut the PBSR. The OECD's calculations, however, avoid many of these pitfalls, and are based on their own internationally comparable definitions of the general government borrowing requirement. Anybody wanting to assess demand changes in Britain would be equally advised to look not at the corrupted PBSR figures but at the figures for the Public Sector Financial Deficit, also given in the budget-time Red Book.

Even the PSFD, of course, might give a misleading impression of the tightness of government policy. It turned out that the Government was raising all its extra money through taxes which have little impact on demand, or spending it in ways which have a lot of impact. This sort of point was recently developed by Dr Paul Neill of brokers Phillips and Drew who argued that the Government's policy is more reflationary than that of Mr Denis Healey.

His key contention, however, is that any government taxation of North Sea oil companies will have no impact on demand, so that by

'A rise in oil prices is almost exactly analogous to a rise in indirect taxes...'

stripping out £12 billion of oil revenues in 1984-85 as against a "whopping" £23 billion adjusted PBSR of £23 billion. And from this observation, Dr Neill argues that fiscal policy has been expansionary with no effect on the economy—arguing we should tighten up the budget and hope falling interest rates do the trick instead.

What Dr Neill implies, though, is that the oil companies would do absolutely nothing with their £12 billion if they were allowed to keep it. But any of the things they might do with it would help boost demand: if they placed it in the money markets, interest rates would be lower and lending higher. If they shipped it abroad, the pound would be lower and manufacturing more competitive. If they spent it on investment, domestic demand would be directly higher.

If it was true, which it is not, that oil companies might indulge in a ceremonial burning of their banknotes in Parliament Square rather than do anything with them, it is not even the case that Dr Neill's conclusion would follow from his premise. For if the oil companies had really become a "black hole" into which purchasing power merely disappeared, then the argument for the Government compensating for price rises (if not production increases) by pumping more demand into the economy would be even stronger.

In reality, there has been a black hole, but it has been the Government, not the oil companies. In a self-sum-

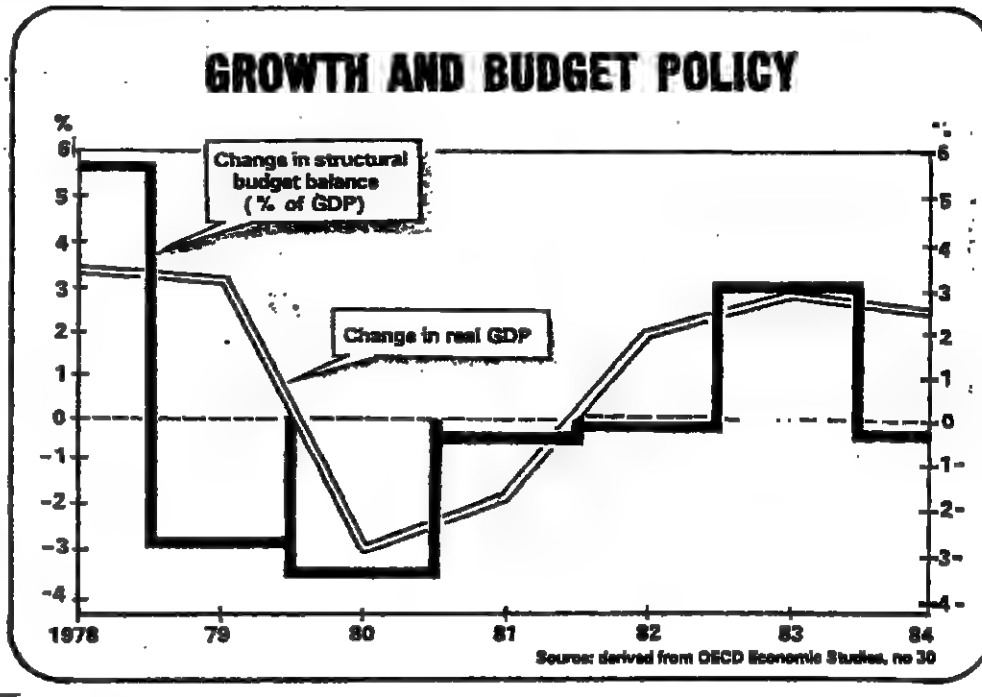
cient oil economy like Britain's, where the Government takes around 90 per cent of the extra oil revenue from a price rise, a hike in oil prices such as that of 1979 is almost exactly analogous to a rise in indirect taxes like VAT: it puts prices up and hence is inflationary, it also cuts real incomes and hence reduces demand and output.

In 1979-80, the Government could have used its windfall extra oil revenues to cut VAT and reduce both prices (or average) to their previous levels and restore purchasing power. It chose instead to use the money to reduce its borrowing. Indeed, it even compounded the effects of the oil price hike by nearly doubling VAT to raise some more money for income tax cuts.

An important condition of any sustained and large fall in unemployment over the next few years is that the Government relaxes its fetish about borrowing. This is not to deny that the precise measures on which the extra

borrowing is spent are unimportant: clearly special employment measures such as the Community programme or subsidies to employers for hiring extra workers are more effective than increases in public investment. And public investment is about as effective as cuts in National Insurance contributions. And both are more effective than income tax cuts.

Equally, the type of measure chosen will affect the amount of inflation which is generated as a result of the expansion: measures targeted at the long-term unemployed, depressed regions and the poor are likely to have less inflationary effect than tax hand-outs to the rich. But there is simply no way that the orders of magnitude of "hand-outs" that the Chancellor is talking about, especially since they are financed by spending cuts rather than more borrowing, are enough to make a real dent on the figures. Budgetary policy has to be relaxed.



PRELIMINARY RESULTS-1984 Ultramar

CONTINUED GROWTH

- Turnover exceeds £3 billion for the first time.
- Net profit increased to £127.6 million.
- Cash flow at an all time high of £215.4 million.
- Total net dividend up from 8½p to 10p per share.
- Record oil and gas production of 83,000 barrels per day of oil equivalent compared to 41,000 barrels per day in 1983.
- Increase in attributable reserves to 615 million barrels of oil equivalent from 400 million barrels in 1983.
- Full potential of major capital projects not yet realised.
- Acquisition of 50 per cent of ENSTAR boosts reserves and production.
- 1985 has started well.

SUMMARY OF FINANCIAL RESULTS		
	Year 1984 £ million	Year 1983 £ million
Turnover (Sales revenue)	3,260.4	2,057.1
Profit on ordinary activities before taxation	284.9	156.0
Profit on ordinary activities after taxation	127.6	122.1
Cash flow from operations	215.4	124.5
Capital expenditures (including acquisitions of new subsidiary and associated companies)	287.7	306.2

OPERATING RESULTS		
	Year 1984	Year 1983
Sales of oil (barrels per day)	291,200	241,100
Oil refined (barrels per day)	104,000	88,400
Oil produced (barrels per day)	26,400	10,600
Gas produced (thousands of cubic feet per day)	340,000	183,800
Gross wells drilled	315	157
Oil and gas wells completed (in which the Group has varying interests)	201	105

The Ashdown Investment Trust Public Limited Company

Managed by J. Henry Schroder Wagg & Co. Limited
The Annual General Meeting was held at 120 Cheapside, London EC2 on Wednesday, 13 March, 1985.

The following is a summary of the Report by the Directors for the year ended 30 November, 1984.

	1984	1983
Total Revenue	£1,686,816	£1,393,247
Revenue after taxation and expenses	£ 948,888	£ 751,702
Earnings per Ordinary Share	8.63p	6.83p
Ordinary dividends for the year net per share	8.20p	7.00p
Net asset value per 25p Ordinary Share	469.1p	428.0p

Copies of the Report and Accounts are available from the Secretaries, J. Henry Schroder Wagg & Co. Limited, 120 Cheapside, London EC2V 6DS.

Ultramar
Morgan House, 1 Angel Court
London EC2R 7AU

Drilling on Block 49/5 in the Southern North Sea Basin

For a copy of the 1984 Preliminary Announcement please write to the Company Secretary at the above address.

GKN forges ahead by 36pc

By Maggie Brown
GKN, the large increasingly internationally oriented automotive parts and industrial goods company, has announced a 36 per cent profit rise for 1984. Its board, chaired by Sir Trevor Holdsworth, appears confident that its five-year plus strategy of turning the company into a highly competitive force with strong US earnings, capable of winning and holding worldwide contracts from the US and European car-makers even against the Japanese is paying off.

Its UK operations, representing 39 per cent of turnover, is still requiring attention and the board is planning to pull out — either by closing or selling off — low return areas. "We will be going out where we can't afford the R&D and investment capital," says Sir Trevor. Last year GKN pulled out of wheel and pistons.

Pre-tax profits rose to £190 million from £138.1 million, helped by £7 million of currency transactions, largely the dollar/sterling exchange rate. Turnover was £2.16 billion (£1.97 billion), and it reports a strong flow of enquiries assisted by the advance coming from its £381 million 44 per cent of turnover, from automotive product and component sales. These provided some 72 per cent of the overall surplus, compared with 68 per cent in 1983.

In broad outline, GKN's automotive division is performing satisfactorily, with a return of 19.4 per cent on net assets, up from last year's 17.3 per cent. But these internationally

respectable returns— spearheaded by sales of the constant velocity joint products which allow front wheel drive—are being scored entirely by its US operations and European (principally West German) operations.

The return from its British automotive plants, accounting for some 55 per cent of the division's turnover, is still well below this overall average, although to be fair it also includes the newer business areas which offer promise for the future, including military armoured vehicles—short of full-scale battle tanks.

The company spent £116 million on capital investment, its highest to date, divided equally between the UK and the US. Its total investment, including acquisition and research and development

topped £200 million. Borrowings climbed to £362 million from £285 million, which pushes its debt to shareholders' funds gearing ratio up to 54.1 per cent, from 40.8 per cent, a sizeable leap, but one GKN seems happy to live with.

The current year is expected to see a resolution of GKN's six years of talks over a rationalisation plan, with parties to the talks, including British Steel, of the UK's engineering steel plants. Sir Trevor said yesterday: "We are quite optimistic. We are expecting a decision this year. British Steel and us are at one on the project, we are waiting for the Government."

Other areas of action include efforts to turn its £70 million a year UK autoparts distribution into profit. The US distribution side is forging ahead, and is indeed ear-marked for

expansion. Mr Ian Donald, deputy managing director said: "We have been disappointed with progress over the last two years, it would be unwise to rush into expansion."

Instead it is carrying out a major cost-reduction exercise on the network it has painfully built up. Sir Trevor is predicting further progress in 1985, and says life assurance premiums rose from £27 million to £28.8 million and contributed £2.55 million to profits, a \$4 million increase over 1983. Industrial premiums were also up at £62 million from £59 million and added £3 million to profits. Investment income fell sharply from £84,000 to £47,000. Bonus levels on both life and industrial policies have been increased to record levels, says Refuge. The dividend is up by 17.5 per cent to 11.7p.

At home, the group faced a fiercely competitive market in which the price of steel was down. Helped by four new branches, UK distribution profits rose from £7 million to £7.3 million. Financial belt tightening by farmers trimmed the farm machinery division's contribution from £733,000 to £604,000. The dividend goes up from 2.67p to 3p. As analysts raised their forecasts for the full year from £28 million to £28.5 million the shares rose 3p to 321p.



Sir Trevor Holdsworth... optimistic

Refuge Group, says that its 1984 results were less adversely affected by the LAFR withdrawal than might have been expected.

The firm's share capital and disclosed reserves rose £39 million last year to £184 million. Like other merchant banks, Schroders' results do not give a true picture because they omit transfers to secret reserves. The total disclosed profit after taxation has fallen from £21 million to £15.1 million, because of a one-off £6.5 million charge for the year before a change in the tax treatment of leasing, which benefited Schroders, unlike most other banks. The dividend is up 12 per cent and the shares were unchanged at 788p.

Low beats forecast
So far the most obvious impact made by Tim Bell at the Low Howard Spink, Campbell, Ewald and group is that the chairman, Frank Lowe, now meets the press wearing a tie. After 15 years at Saatchi & Saatchi—part of time was spent as Mr Thatcher's image maker Mr Bell's main task at his new desk at Lowe is to capture new business.

After its maiden year on the USM the group has beaten its prospectus forecast by £200,000 with a 124 per cent increase in pre-tax profits to £2.6 million. The dividend at 2.8p is also better than the forecast 2.4p. Mr Lowe emphasises that the growth so far represents increased efficiency and is delighted with the 4 per cent margin—far higher than the industry average. He plans to hold that margin on all new business.

Refuge relieved
Refuge Assurance yesterday became the latest life company to come through the abolition of life assurance premium relief in last year's budget unscathed. The company now

the progress in 1985, and says life assurance premiums rose from £27 million to £28.8 million and contributed £2.55 million to profits, a \$4 million increase over 1983. Industrial premiums were also up at £62 million from £59 million and added £3 million to profits. Investment income fell sharply from £84,000 to £47,000. Bonus levels on both life and industrial policies have been increased to record levels, says Refuge. The dividend is up by 17.5 per cent to 11.7p.

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Victor in the red
Victor Products, the Tyneside light engineer supplying the National Coal Board and industrial customers with plugs and lighting equipment, is being pushed into the red in the year ending next month by the miners' strike. Orders have already picked up, however, so there is a good prospect of a speedy recovery. The interim dividend is being maintained.

The reduction in turnover in electronic and hydraulic controls, though these incurred some initial losses. On sales £400,000 down to £385,000 for the six months to October 31, there was a pre-tax loss of £549,000.

The interim dividend of 1.6p net a share and 9p a share will not strain finances, and the shares added 2p to 110p where they yield 6 per cent.

Edited by Tony May

Oils knocked by decision to axe BNOC

THE MARKETS

Generally quiet trading conditions persisted throughout yesterday. Some uncertainty developed late in the afternoon when both the oil market and gold-edged sectors fell back following the announcement from the Government that they were to abolish BNOC. Oils although off the bottom in places recovered a broad list of falls.

Shell today report trading down 22p to 778p (after 779p). Glits too, with not looking happy closing in places with falls to 4 after showing rises of 1 or 2 at the outset.

Pre-emptively the market had displayed a quiet firm bias helped by more encouraging trading statements. Investment demand, however, was rather limited, with sentiment still clouded by the unsatisfactory money supply indication, and fading hopes of any appreciable cut in interest rates. Food shares were looking somewhat uncertain as investors considered the £38 million call for shareholders' cash from United Biscuits which fell 5p at 188p. Rowntree-Mackintosh which report their results today gave up 10p at 388p. In the engineering sector, interest focused upon GKN, where results matched expectations. Initially the shares lost 5p, but by the end of the day rallied to 222p—up 2p on balance.

Leading shares as measured by the 30 share FT-SE 100 index fared fairly evenly balanced. There were 10 falls against eight plus shares. Banks made progress and there was investment buying of insurance. Among the special situation stocks, the motor sector was particularly active. Forster Bros emerged as Searc Holdings. Forster Bros were not particularly impressed by the recommended offer ending 2p earlier at 228p. Pauls meanwhile, after the agreed bid from Harrison & Crossfield—7p lower at 488p—closed 4p ahead at 388p.

Elsewhere, there was considerable interest in W. H. Smith & Co. which advanced 14p at 222p on speculative demand. The company refused to comment on stake build up rumours. Other newsgroup shares were well supported in quiet trading.

In the oil sector, BP closed 5p down at 388p. The majority of this fall occurred just prior

to the announcement of the BNOC abolition. Treasuries, which had been dull all day, suffered on pre-taking closing 5p lower at 210p, after the results of the rights issue were announced.

Ultramar, which reported figures, closed unchanged at 210p, having risen to 213p and then fallen to 209p at one stage. Falcon Resources met further demand and moved up 15p to 428p. While Invest Eas—an extremely firm counter of late thanks to exploration hopes, improved another 50p to 1,080p.

Main changes were GKN 222p up 2p, United Biscuits 188p down 5p, Pauls 388p down 10p, Forster Bros 228p down 2p, Harrison and Crossfield 488p down 7p, WH Smith 222p up 14p, Rowntree 388p down 10p, Shell 778p down 22p.

Turnover for March 12 was: Numbered bargains 24,559; Value £374,934 million. Hong Kong: Share prices dipped in what one broker described as a "soggy market". Although brokers said the day's market trended downward, they said investor sentiment is generally bullish in the long term. Hang Seng index: 13,582.2 (13,715.1).

Paris: Prices continued to advance. Frankfurt: Share prices were mixed in quiet trading in what brokers termed a consolidation at high levels. The Dax-Index closed 2.2 points to 1214.3, from Tuesday's post-war record. Tokyo: Stock prices surged in heavy broad-based buying, with gains outpacing losses. The Nikkei 225 index rose 120 to 2,100. The sudden jump caught people by surprise. A broker said, "The rally was of substance. Nikkei Dow Jones index: 12,419.28 (12,398.87). Money markets: Period rates were mixed. They opened sharply higher, partly because of views of base rate prospects had faded. There was a further upward jerk to rates in the late afternoon, when news came through that the Government was dismantling BNOC.

FT Ordinary Share Index: down 2.9 at 974.1. FT-SE 100: down 4.8 at 1255.5. Found: £1,666. DM 2.84; Fr 11.15. Gold: \$233.56. Account: March 11 to 22. FT All Share Index: down 1.07 at 624.78. Sterling Index 71.6 (1975=100). £22.555.5 (January) up 5 pc on year.

COMPANY BRIEFING

Ultramar profit advances £129m

Low prices and overcapacity did not stop oil group Ultramar from turning in a £129 million increase in pre-tax profits to £285 million. But the full benefits of new capital investment projects failed to come through because of the problems at the refining and marketing end of the oil and gas business which left the group with much higher interest charges on the borrowings it needed to fund the new installations.

Interest charges shot up from £25 million to £129 million and combined with much higher taxes on Ultramar's increased oil production the company hardly raised its net profit. This rose just over £5 million to £127.5 million.

Ultramar said that "overcapacity in all phases of the industry and the resulting struggle to maintain market share kept pressure on profit margins of petroleum products and restricted our ability to increase sales of liquefied natural gas from the expanded plant in Indonesia. As a result we have yet to realise the full potential of some of the major capital projects completed in 1983."

Indonesia and the UK were the main contributors to operating profit, but these are highly taxed countries.

Capital spending during the year was £288 million, including Ultramar's 50 per cent share of the US oil and gas company Enstar which cost £130 million. Oil and gas production now totals an all time high for Ultramar of 26,400 barrels a day in the North Sea, Indonesia, Western Canada and the United States, together with 340 million cubic feet of gas a day. Reserves under the ground have also shot up from 400 mil-



BENSON'S Crisps, the US-listed potato processor, is raising £1.8 million in bank loans and from local authority backers to cover last year's loss and finance the final stages of the ambitious expansion programme. Ultramar as well as management failings caused the loss and necessitated the large-scale refinancing package. However, plentiful potato supplies should help to keep sales rising.

Although turnover more than doubled to £10 million in the year to November, the XL acquisition and Welsh factory development brought problems that were compounded by high potato and cooking oil prices. A trading loss of £240,000 is likely to be reported next month. Ex-

cess costs of £500,000 arising from the late start-up and XL rationalisation are largely responsible. Demand was stronger than anticipated, forcing new raw material purchases at peak prices. Overdraft facilities of £1.2 million have been arranged and Lancashire's new enterprise body is providing a large part of longer term loans of £600,000. They include £200,000 in 10 per cent convertible stock that could raise the share capital by about 10 per cent. The share price fell another 7p to 41p on the announcement, which is under a third of the peak reached a year ago. The directors say that the latest quarter was profitable and new orders worth £1.5 million have been won.

ing the period. Another seven barrels were opened and Benson now operates 212 freezer centres.

On the increase in the half-time dividend to 1.75p against 1.4p last time, adjusted for the rights issue, Benson's shares lifted 2p to 160p.

Mr John Apporth, Benson's chairman, said trading since Christmas gave the group confidence to forecast profits well ahead of last year's £15.6 million.

Confident Bejam
Bejam, the frozen food centre chain, notched up another useful advance in first-half profit and looks set to beat last year's profit level. Pre-tax profit rose to £9.7 million in the half year to December, against £7.8 million last time, on sales up by £19 million to £173 million. Sales were higher both in existing stores and new branches dur-

ing the period. Another seven barrels were opened and Benson now operates 212 freezer centres.

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Wolseley's US wonder
There should be a picture of Ronald Reagan in the boardroom of Wolseley Hughes, for his economic boom has done wonders for group profits. The plumbing and heating giant posted its pre-tax profits of £10.6 million, £18.3 million in the first half of the year,

and most of the action was in the US.

The group is the fourth largest distributor in the south-eastern and southern states, the "Sunshine Belt," and even though the President is now supposed to be trying to slow the economic boom there, the group is expanding the number of its outlets at the same time.

The upshot in the first half was a jump in trading profits from the US from £3 million to £2.9 million. The group has opened five new branches since the end of its last financial year and the total could reach 16 by the year end.

The weakness of the pound added £680,000 to profits.

At home, the group faced a fiercely competitive market in which the price of steel was down. Helped by four new branches, UK distribution profits rose from £7 million to £7.3 million. Financial belt tightening by farmers trimmed the farm machinery division's contribution from £733,000 to £604,000. The dividend goes up from 2.67p to 3p. As analysts raised their forecasts for the full year from £28 million to £28.5 million the shares rose 3p to 321p.

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Schroders expands
Schroders, the merchant bank, expects to put £15 million into its equity dealing business and about the same into its gilt operations by the end of 1985, as it moves deeper into the Stock Exchange. The bank, which yesterday disclosed profits of £15.1 million before tax and extraordinary items compared with £14.4 million last year, also reports that its newly-expanded hooking business is late the black this year after making a small loss worldwide last year. Development spending is being taken on the nose, out of profits.

Schroders' chairman, Mr George Mallinckrodt, reckons that there is no need for a rights issue or other capital raising to fund the expansion

in securities, because the group feels comfortably capitalised to at least the end of 1986.

The firm's share capital and disclosed reserves rose £39 million last year to £184 million. Like other merchant banks, Schroders' results do not give a true picture because they omit transfers to secret reserves.

The total disclosed profit after taxation has fallen from £21 million to £15.1 million, because of a one-off £6.5 million charge for the year before a change in the tax treatment of leasing, which benefited Schroders, unlike most other banks. The dividend is up 12 per cent and the shares were unchanged at 788p.

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COMMODITIES

Copper: Cash £1,299 per tonne; three months £1,276 per tonne; May 1985 £1,276 per tonne. Tin: Cash £1,299 per tonne; three months £1,276 per tonne; May 1985 £1,276 per tonne. Lead: Cash £1,299 per tonne; three months £1,276 per tonne; May 1985 £1,276 per tonne. Zinc: Cash £1,299 per tonne; three months £1,276 per tonne; May 1985 £1,276 per tonne. Nickel: Cash £1,299 per tonne; three months £1,276 per tonne; May 1985 £1,276 per tonne. Silver: Cash £1,299 per tonne; three months £1,276 per tonne; May 1985 £1,276 per tonne. Gold: Cash £1,299 per tonne; three months £1,276 per tonne; May 1985 £1,276 per tonne.

FOREIGN EXCHANGES

TOURIST RATES—BANK SELLS

STERLING RATES

UK HIGH STREET

UK MONEY MARKETS

INTEREST RATES

UK HIGH STREET

UK MONEY MARKETS

UK HIGH STREET

UK MONEY MARKETS

UK HIGH STREET

'The budget options that would tax credibility'



INVESTMENT
Robin Stoddart

IF HIGHER profits were the main aim of the Thatcher administration its success has been glittering indeed. Paeans of praise and gratitude, not to mention party donations, should be pouring from the City and boardrooms after the remarkable revival in corporate fortunes over the last three years.

But the essential quid pro quo is higher capital investment. Only such outlays can ensure that the rise in living standards will be maintained so that most of the electorate will continue to be duly grateful for economic receipts and annual blessings. At bottom they have rising North Sea oil output and the strong dollar to thank for such uneven gains as they have accumulated.

The huge switch from the private sector to the public purse of the heaviest costs of unproductive production and reverse movement of lucrative assets are the main changes that can be credited to this government. The burden of overmanaging has been shed and passed to social security. No doubt the redundancy was worse than anyone bargained for, though much of it stemmed from the lethal course of high interest rates and, for a few years, a vastly overvalued pound. The sacrifice on the altar of privatisation is no less expensive on revenue account while corporate tax remains low.

The gorged and enlarged private sector is not yet repaying with grateful patriotism. New employment and the vote-catching that would go with it are still conspicuous by their absence.

While there has been some improvement in capital spending over the last three years it is still far short of the pre-recessionary peak. Latest statistics suggest that investment in manufacturing industry last year was just over £2 billion — nearly a quarter — below the 1979 peak. Although manufacturing now accounts for less than a quarter of total fixed capital spending, the trend in the distribution and services sector, though much more favourable, is less relevant to future prosperity. Construction and vehicle spending are among the largest items and the trend there is, at best, flat.

Apart from energy and office equipment outlays, where spending has risen most years, new investment in plant and machinery has remained at a low ebb. In chemicals, textiles, metals and mechanical engineering it is down by about half from the pre-recessionary peak. Mining has inevitably been worse still. Even in

slowdown in domestic consumption and oil output will be made good elsewhere, including the pits. Apart from investment, only import substitution can promote job creation in industry. It must be obvious, however, that until the construction sector — which provides the most lasting form of investment — revives, there is no prospect of a significant decline in unemployment.

'A litter tax would be the best single new step the Chancellor could take'

Hopes of interest rate reductions, which stimulate building, keep being deferred by internal monetary imbalances as well as the external forces affecting sterling. Since the banks now offer much better interest rates than building societies, some inflation of the money supply aggregates is liable to continue until the societies even up their rates.

The route to lower interest costs may lie through cuts in government expenditure, but the months of wasted resources have now become years and there is still no sign of such a virtuous circle developing. Increased overall spending, particularly in the US, has been a motor of the world recovery. Although further expressions of intentions to reduce the public sector borrowing requirement are desirable, they carry even less conviction when expectations of tax reductions have been fostered ahead of every budget.

Regressive tax increases have in fact been more common than income tax cuts so far. Further rises in fuel and utility prices are not only regressive but a burden on industry and commerce. The incentives provided by reductions in the highest rates of income tax are more than doubtful. They are, in practice, misdirected since the relief afforded to entrepreneurs and business expansion schemes investors are more attractive when tax rates are high. Hugely generous retirement payments are hardly likely to spur fruitful direct investment either, so the lower level of the pound will enable exports to go on rising and that the gradual

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food, there is still a lot of leeway to be made up and drink and paper, if not publishing, are dead letters. Only a few suppliers in these areas of engineering have been able to replenish order books from overseas sources.

Hopes of export-led growth are heavily dependent on the United States economic upsurge and strong dollar. Compared with their foreign rivals, few British manufacturers have raised domestic capacity in order to lift sales, as well as profitability in that market. In the motor sector, which is crucial to all industrial countries, Britain was a non-starter in the main family car sector. Past difficulties and fears that the shutters might come down are no excuse after he fell in sterling.

The Government may still retain the hope that the lower level of the pound will enable exports to go on rising and that the gradual

The rise in index-linked stocks and flat trend of conventional gilts and most shares is a fair indication of the lack of faith in the Government's economic policy. Any deterioration in the rate of recovery being seen in the bigger industrial countries would exert downward pressure on most markets. And President Reagan's Olympian detachment is worrying as the next date for heavy international debt servicing draws near.

Higher taxation of those able to pay could also be a sign that the PSBR will be brought down more successfully, if not just yet. Most other options, including cuts other than defence savings, lack credibility, like PSBR and monetary targets themselves.

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For a more sizeable and lasting increase in revenue, only value-added tax provides any great scope. Its extension to basic commodities and services would raise many billions but as long as the price of oil and volume of North Sea output stays high, there may be no need for such an inflationary step. On pension funds' income tax concessions a declaration of more stringent intent, at least, seems unavoidable.

Extra taxation and additional spending on infrastructure, health and training are the only certain means of reversing the rise in unemployment, such outlays also provide a high social return even allowing for some white elephants and bureaucratic excrescences. Some new levies might best be administered by local authorities, though the cost of many improvements and cleaning activities should be capable of being passed back to those most responsible for the deterioration or their suppliers. A litter tax would be the best single new step the Chancellor could take.

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Powell frozen embryo pledge

EMBRYO BILL

By Colin Brown

SUPPORTERS of Mr Enoch Powell's bill to outlaw experimentation on embryos claimed yesterday that they had been given an assurance that it would not prevent any future births of frozen embryos.

The assurance, which is understood to have been given to Mr Powell (OUP, S. Down) in writing by officials at the Department of Health and Social Security will be used as a powerful propaganda weapon against critics of the bill, including eminent scientists.

They have said it would stop any repeat of the successful birth of a child last

week in Manchester from an embryo which had been frozen.

Two leading doctors in the field of in vitro fertilisation, Dr David Whittingham of the Medical Research Council and Mr Robert Winston of Hammersmith Hospital, warned MPs yesterday that the bill was being considered in committee, that it would prevent research to make the frozen embryo technique safe against possible malformations.

Supporters of the bill said yesterday they had been given assurances at a private meeting with DHSS officials that embryos could be frozen for up to four months, with a possible extension to six months, on the permission of the Social Services Secretary, under their proposed legisla-

tion, provided it was intended to re-implant the embryo in the woman from whom the eggs were taken.

They were also assured that the bill did not preclude research on dead embryos.

Mr Powell's measure stops embryos being bred for research purposes and requires doctors to obtain the permission of the Secretary of State to hold embryos in their possession and to carry out test-tube baby fertilisation techniques.

Mr Kenneth Clarke, the Health Minister, said in the committee last night that there was no precedent for requiring the permission of the Secretary of State before an operation could be carried out.

Mr Clarke went on: "I do not agree personally with the

policy behind the bill and I don't believe that it should be so tightly controlled in this way. I don't think it is right that the Secretary of State's permission should be sought."

He believed in continuing research being closely regulated. Mr Clarke supported an amendment to the bill tabled by opponents to pass responsibility for authorising operations to the voluntary licensing authority jointly established by the Medical Research Council and the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists.

The bill, which is due to remain in committee for more than three weeks, is being strongly resisted by the opponents with a series of amendments.

TIMES REPORT

Privilege inquiry on leak

By our Political Staff

A complaint about a leak to the Times of a draft report from the Commons home affairs committee is to be investigated by the Commons Committee of Privileges.

Amid loud protests, Sir Edward Gardner, the chairman of the home affairs committee, said the article published in the Times diary on March 6 had been an attempt to embarrass and influence the committee's inquiry into the work of the Special Branch.

Before the vote on the move, Mr John Biffen, the Leader of the House, warned that there was a "grave danger of making a total fool of themselves."

"Gone are the days when Sir John Junor (the editor of the Sunday Express) stood before the bar of the House to be admonished by MPs," he said.

Mr Biffen who supported the reference to the Committee of Privileges said it was nevertheless necessary to maintain the conventions of the House.

Mr Michael Foot (Lab, Blaenau Gwent) said he was not in favour of sabotaging select committees by leaking their documents before they reported to the House.

But any action taken by the Committee of Privileges would not stop leakages, indeed, all it would do would multiply the number of applications to the privilege committee.

"If you get leaks from the Cabinet and every week, you could not expect very much higher standard from a select committee than we do from the Cabinet. These are matters of honour and we are in danger of destroying a relationship between MPs and journalists."

Several Labour MPs who were members of the home affairs committee claimed that if there was any "witch-hunting" to be done, it should be of the MP who leaked the report rather than the journalist who was merely fulfilling his or her duty of disclosure to the public.

Sir Ian Gilmour (C, Chesham and Amersham) opposed the reference to the Committee of Privileges saying the whole thing was a relatively unimportant matter.

"Whoever leaked this report was in error and was guilty of a breach of trust. The journalist was not guilty. He was performing his duty as a journalist. If we put this motion we shall be in danger of failing to make that distinction."

Mr Robin Corbett (Lab, Erdington) said he was not prepared to say whether or not he was responsible for the alleged leak but every day members of the parliamentary press lobby were "wheeled across to Number 10 Downing Street to collect their little goodies and so on one complained about that."

But Sir Terence Higgins (C, Worthing), the chairman of the Treasury and Civil Service Select Committee, warned that leaks damaged the work of select committees and in this case a report that the home affairs committee had decided not to issue a critical final report on the work of the Special Branch was usurping the role of that committee.

He said it was suggested that the chairman's draft report represented the views of the committee but it had not been discussed as yet by the full committee.

Sir Terence asked for action over this saying it was not a question of "being pompous" but of allowing MPs to work effectively. "I suspect that there would be far fewer leaks from select committees if it was clearly understood that such leaks could not be presented in the press."

The complaint was referred to the Committee of Privileges by a vote of 268 to 169.

Tourist trail

Jarrow and South Shields are attempting to become tourist attractions as Catherine Cookson country. The author is lending her name to a £50,000 campaign to launch a tourist trail in the area on the map.

Spending curb on home sales cash 'stupid'

HOUSING

By our Political Staff

THE shadow environment secretary, Dr John Cunningham, last night launched an Opposition attack with the support of Tory backbenchers in a government ruling that will prevent local authorities from spending receipts from council house sales on more council house building.

The Government was faced with a serious back bench rebellion over the Order putting the ruling into effect. A number of Tory MPs were threatening to vote against the Government, but far more were preparing to abstain to register their protest against the "economic strategy" behind the ruling.

Dr Cunningham said it was not only "demonstrably stupid" but it was also doubly damaging to millions of people and to the infrastructure of the British economy.

The arguments of the Secretary of State (Mr Patrick Jenkin) have few friends outside the Cabinet and almost none in local government, and the building and construction industry, he said. Yet again you have united local authority associations against you," he told Mr Jenkin.

Local authority capital expenditure has been consistently reduced in every year of the Government's term of office, he said.

In 1983-3 it was half the amount of a decade earlier and in real terms about £1 billion less than when the

Government came into office in 1979, he claimed.

"Ministers now argue that local authority capital expenditure must be controlled and councils must lend their money and not spend it so that the Public Sector Borrowing Requirement can be reduced," said Dr Cunningham.

"The Government is forcing local councils to use their own money in support of the political aims and objectives of central government and in doing so preventing councils from answering the need of people who are homeless; living in overcrowded and unfit housing and those requiring improvement grants."

Mr Patrick Jenkin, in an effort to quell the threatened Conservative revolt, announced that the Government intended to press ahead with plans for new legislation to replace the current system of local authority capital expenditure controls and he announced a further minor concession to the system this year.

The Government had already announced that council houses built for the first time should be exempt from the tighter control on the use of receipts.

"We are also making another change," he said. "The new Historic Buildings Commission makes grants available to councils for the preservation of buildings in their ownership. Such sums will now score as capital receipts, one hundred per cent of which may be spent by councils on preserving our national heritage."



Dr Cunningham: 'Doubtly damaging'

Mr Jenkin said that there are now around £5 billion worth of accumulated receipts from the sale of council assets which helped to reduce local authority debt and as they were added to the total of public expenditure.

Mr Jenkin said that the Order, which cuts from 40 to 20 per cent the amount of capital receipts a council may spend in any one year, would not prevent local authorities spending the receipts in due course.

"The only issue on this side of the House is the pace at which they should be spent. It is central to the Government's case that the pace at which they should be spent must be consistent with the overall judgment of the proper level of public spending that the country can afford."

Tory group press for jobs

By Colin Bowen

THE Tory Reform Group is redoubting its demand for the Government to do more to create jobs by devoting its annual conference later this month to reducing unemployment.

Mr Edward Heath, the former Prime Minister, continuing critic of the government economic policy, will be among the key speakers, with Mr Peter Walker, the group's president, the Energy Secretary, who promises the main voice of dissent within the Cabinet.

Mr Tom King, the Employment Secretary, will also be addressing the conference at Oxford. Professor Layard, the author of the Social Democratic Party's economic policy, which included an anti-inflation wage, tax proposal, has been invited.

The chairman of the group, Mr Iain Pictou, said the group intended to keep up its campaign for a change of government policy towards creating more employment. It recently proposed a £2 billion jobs package for the budget instead of tax reduction.

He said, "Above all we will



Mr Walker—Cabinet dissent

be saying, 'You did it for Scargill, you did it for Scargill' now do it for unemployment. If you are prepared to be flexible on the Public Sector borrowing requirement for them, you ought to be flexible to reduce unemployment."

He said there was a subtle difference between the group's philosophy and the Heathite view of Conservative 10 years ago: now there was greater proximity of view between traditional or right-wing Conservatives and liberal Conservatives. "There is not simply a Wet-Dry split on economics."

He believed many more Tories now shared the group's scepticism with the Government's observance of monetary and borrowing targets.

The group was formed 10 years ago, four months after Mr Thatcher became the leader of the party. Its earliest utterances were so critical of the new leader that Mr William Whitelaw had to deliver a sharp rap over the knuckles.

Nearly all of the members are party activists, either as councillors, Young Conservatives, Tory students or MPs. They meet at Westminster and say that nationally they have about 500 members.

They believe they are now more influential than the Bow Group and the Selous Group, which emerges at the annual party conference. The group plans more meetings and discussion documents on employment. The former junior employment minister, Mr James Lester, who is behind the formation of the Tory employment group of Tory MPs, is preparing a paper on youth-training schemes and improvement to the community programme.

Bring pay into the open call

TWELVE Labour MPs yesterday tabled a Commons motion demanding that MPs should declare how much they are paid as parliamentary consultants.

This follows the disclosure in the Register of Members' Interests published this week of an almost 50 per cent increase in the consultancy fees paid by MPs over the past 12 months. A total of 137 MPs have registered 285 consultancies, an increase of 110 over the period.

Mr Peter Fry (C, Welwynborough a director of Political Research Communications International, declared the largest number of consultancies — 20 of them including Kentucky Fried Chicken and other business interests.

The Labour MPs led by Mr Terry Lewis (Worle) said the amounts of pay received for such consultancies should be disclosed in the register.

Road 'would enhance Dartmoor's beauty'

By Sarah Bosseley

Objectors to the Department of Transport's planned route for the A30 Okehampton bypass road which would cut across Dartmoor national park in Devon have a case which should be heard, a joint committee of the Commons and Lords decided yesterday.

The ruling came half way through hearings set in motion by a group of 10 organisations using a rarely used act to have their case examined, even though the Department of Transport had made its decision and issued compulsory purchase orders on land it needed to build the road.

At the end of the protesters' evidence, the department had asked the committee to dismiss the case. But yesterday the committee held unanimously that the proceedings should continue.

At yesterday's renewed proceedings, Mr George Wedd, an Under-Secretary at the Transport and Environment Department, stressed that the bypass plan had been prepared and gone through all its public consultation stages with "open-

ness, fairness and impartiality."

Questioned by Mr Michael Harrison, QC, counsel for the objectors, Mr Wedd agreed that the proposed road ran counter to the designated objectives of national parks which were firstly, to preserve and enhance natural beauty and secondly, to promote their enjoyment by the public.

Mr Wedd said, however, that the road would enhance the moorland area. He said: "The road itself would be a handsome public work and fit in well with the northern part of the moor."

Asked by Mr Harrison if he really believed the road would enhance the natural beauty of the moor, Mr Wedd said: "That depends on the view one takes of the twentieth-century and its public works. There is an argument that a new road could be a handsome feature if rightly designed."

Asked what geographical features would make an alternative route to the north of Okehampton unworkable, Mr Wedd said there were several. The hearing continues today.

Interest Rates on Deposits

From 6th April 1985, all banks in the United Kingdom will be required to adopt a new system for paying interest earned on sterling deposits. Foreign currency deposits will come into a new system from 6th April 1986. This is a Government requirement announced by the Chancellor of the Exchequer in the March 1984 Budget and legislated for in the Finance Act 1984.

Under the new system, customers affected will receive interest net of tax. The tax, which is called 'Composite Rate Tax' or 'CRT', will be accounted for by the Bank at source and paid direct to the Inland Revenue. CRT already applies in respect of interest earned on Building Society deposits. Banks currently pay interest gross, i.e. without tax being deducted. The level of CRT is set once a year by the Government, and will be 25.25% for the year commencing 6th April 1985.

Corporate Bodies, Charities, many Clubs and Societies, certain Trusts and some other Unincorporated Bodies are excluded from the CRT scheme and will continue to receive interest on a gross basis.

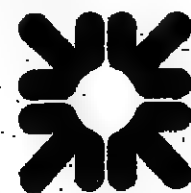
Overseas residents are also unaffected provided the Bank holds a

declaration stating that the person entitled to the interest is not ordinarily resident in the UK. Declaration forms can be obtained from your branch of Williams & Glyn's Bank.

CRT provides a benefit for taxpayers because they are not liable to pay any further tax at the basic rate on the interest received from the Bank. Consequently, because the CRT rate, 25.25%, is lower than the basic rate of tax, currently 30%, this means that for every £100 of interest, customers will retain £74.75 after tax as opposed to £70 under the present system. Higher rate taxpayers will only have to pay the difference between the higher rate and the basic rate. Under the terms of legislation, non-taxpayers cannot reclaim the tax paid by the Bank.

Customers holding savings accounts may request their Branch to credit interest accrued up to and including 31st March 1985 to the accounts on that date and this will be paid gross. Customers who are taxpayers may find it to their advantage to allow interest to accrue as normal until 30th September 1985 when it will be paid net of CRT.

A leaflet providing fuller details about CRT is available at branches.



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Employers confident of selling package deal to Joseph

Lecturers hope to break through 4pc pay barrier

By Andrew Moncur, Education Staff

Leaders of 76,000 college lecturers expect a pay offer next week which breaks through the 4 per cent barrier — the limit which has led to deadlock and dispute on the school teachers' wage front.

Key figures on the employers' side are believed to be confident that they can come up with a deal that can be sold to Sir Keith Joseph, the Education Secretary, as well as the lecturers' union.

They are talking in terms of percentage points, but even that would be a significant shift in the eyes of teachers' union leaders who have rejected a "final offer" of 4 per cent.

The package, still being discussed by the local authority employers, is expected to be

Schools affected by strike, page 4

put to the lecturers' union negotiators at an informal meeting on Monday.

Their pay talks are due to resume in the Burnham further education committee next Thursday, by which time colleges are likely to be hit by the first round of disruptive action called in support of the union's salary campaign.

The employers are considering an offer which would include changes in salary structure coming into operation in September. The aim is to improve the prospects of thousands of college staff now trapped on the lowest pay scales.

Mr John Pearson, of Wakefield, who leads the employers' side in the further education salary talks, said yesterday: "I think we are within touching distance of each other. I regard the situation as being one of extreme delicacy, but

we are still talking and we have the basis of a package which could form an agreement."

Mr David Triesman, negotiator for the National Association of Teachers in Further and Higher Education said that he did not yet know the elements of the package or the degree of assent on the management side.

He went on: "I don't sense that the issues which caused the breakdown in the schools are necessarily the absolute limits which would be set in a further education discussions."

Mr Nigel de Gruchy, deputy general secretary of the second largest schools union, the National Association of Schoolmasters/Union of Women Teachers, said last night: "We have always believed that the 4 per cent offer could be improved if something better is offered in further education, it proves the point."

The key to the package expected to be offered to college lecturers is that it includes changes in salary structure.

That avenue was offered to the school teachers but effectively torpedoed when the dominant National Union of Teachers walked out of a structure working party in December.

Threats of industrial action spreading to colleges comes as the separate dispute in schools is about to worsen. The NUT yesterday announced plans to bring out another 7,000 teachers in 47 education authorities on its next wave of three-day strikes next week.

The Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service will begin to explore a solution to the dispute at two meetings next week. Mr Pat Lowry, the chairman, and Mr Denis Boyd, chief conciliator, will have exploratory talks with the employers on Tuesday.

Mr Roy Link, the area union finance officer who took over Mr Richardson's post indicated last night that the union would fight the injunction.

Lawyers argued at yesterday's hearing that Mr Richardson had not done anything in his capacity as area general secretary which could be described as gross misconduct, the only lawful basis for his dismissal under the union's rules. Lawyers acting on his behalf, denied that the distribution of leaflets advocating staying in the national union amounted to misconduct.

Mr Richardson said that the sacking was a "vindictive act, carried out because I have followed my conscience and backed the strike."

But the judge gave the area union leave to apply at 48 hours notice to have the injunction discharged.

Dismissal overruled

By Patrick Wintour, Labour Staff

The High Court yesterday quashed the sacking of Mr Henry Richardson as general secretary of the Nottinghamshire area miners' union.

Mr Richardson, one of the minority of Nottinghamshire miners who backed the strike, was dismissed on Monday by the Nottinghamshire area executive for "gross misconduct."

Mr Justice Steyn, at a private hearing, ordered the area union not to act on its decision to sack Mr Richardson from all his area positions until a full trial of the issues had been held.

But the judge gave the area union leave to apply at 48 hours notice to have the injunction discharged.

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Labour argues case for 'united' budget

By James Naughtie, Political Correspondent

Mr Roy Hattersley, the Shadow Chancellor, yesterday declared himself leader of a united front against the Government's economic strategy and included among his supporters the Liberals, the Social Democrats and Mr Edward Heath.

Mr Hattersley produced a carefully-moderated plan for a Labour budget, arguing that the level of public expenditure on a proportion of national income could be kept steady to produce £5 billion for a national investment programme to create jobs.

He said that the Government's plan for the public sector borrowing requirement meant a cut of £3.5 billion, and he added that that figure the £1.5 billion floated by the Chancellor, Mr Nigel Lawson, as a possible level of tax cuts to be announced when he presents his Budget to the Commons next Tuesday.

The result of the Labour plan, Mr Hattersley said, was a figure of about £5 billion for job creation, which commanded broad support everywhere but in the Treasury and Downing Street.

The Alliance parties have already produced an alternative budget proposing increased expenditure of £2 billion as part of an expansionary economic programme. Last night Mr Heath, as guest presenter of the Channel 4 programme *Diverse Reports*, said that he favoured increasing public borrowing by £3 billion to allow for necessary investment by the Government.

Speaking at Westminster, Mr Hattersley said: "There is now a general consensus among people that reducing unemployment is the most important task in the budget, and that the best way to do it is by the sort of investment programme that we propose."

Mr Hattersley's remarks reflect the decision by the Shadow Cabinet to dispense with the traditional full-scale alternative budget in preparation for next week's presentation by Mr Lawson, and to concentrate instead on a series of positive proposals designed to put the Government on the defensive.

Labour leaders are conscious that an over-ambitious plan to raise the Public Sector Borrowing Requirement would invite a Tory counter-attack accusing the Opposition of financial irresponsibility.

When Mr Hattersley's strategy was approved by his colleagues last month, he argued that it was important to fight the budget battle on the Government's ground rather than on Labour's.

As a result, his pre-budget demands concentrate on two areas: increases in selected benefits to help the lower paid, and a restoration of the levels of certain taxes on the better-off to their 1981 levels to pay for the package.

Yesterday he proposed a £3 increase in child benefit, a £5 increase in the single old age pension, an £8 increase for a married couple, and the introduction of long-term supplementary benefits for the long-term unemployed.

Mr Hattersley said his programme would cost £2.825 billion net of inflation and the clawback of other benefit costs.

Mr Hattersley also said that national insurance contributions should be levied uniformly across the income scale, producing £1 billion in extra revenue.

Mr Heath's package included investment of £1.5 billion on direct support for industry, £2 billion for spending on public works, and £1.5 billion for extra training.

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Scottish coal board firm on sack

By Peter Hetherington

The National Coal Board in Scotland yesterday repeated its determination not to take back 180 miners sacked during the pit strike. Board officials in other areas where 580 cases are involved displayed a continuing willingness to reinstate some men and review the cases of others.

Scottish churchmen, MPs and two chief constables have called for greater flexibility on the issue, but the board underlined a recent statement by the Scottish area director, Mr Albert Wheeler: "People have been sacked for violence and intimidation and we do not want them back in the industry."

While the Scottish area declines to recognise the industry's conciliation procedure while an overtime ban continues, officials in most of the board's 11 other areas—including Yorkshire, the North East, South Wales and North Derbyshire—stressed they would be

looking at each case on its merits.

Most said that sacked miners would be free to appeal through the industry's procedure as a last resort.

Mr Wheeler defends his line on the grounds that no miners in Scotland have been sacked for "Trivial" offences, such as stealing small amounts of coal.

This argument is strongly contested by the National Union of Mineworkers, which claims that union officials have been deliberately singled out. The board says that there were 1,500 arrests and 900 convictions north of the border.

The board at a national level has left its area directors and individual managers to decide on the best course of action.

An official at the NCB's headquarters in London said that a common policy had been laid down by the chairman, Mr Ian MacGregor.

"He has said that people convicted of serious offences, such as grievous bodily harm,

intimidation, vandalism, and serious theft would not be taken back under any circumstances."

"Beyond that, decisions would be left to area directors, and it is emerging that there can be both considerable confusion and room for manoeuvre, on what constitutes a serious offence."

Some area directors and managers are displaying some leniency in the interests of

bringing harmony back to the industry, while a few are taking a hard line.

Mr Ken Moses, the North Derbyshire area director, who played a leading role in breaking the strike, has re-employed 100 sacked miners, although 30 have not been taken back. The cases of all men are individually examined. Mr Moses denies he is being conciliatory and describes his approach as "commonsense."

Mr Moses insisted that he would take a hard line if necessary. This week he visited one pit and warned the men that the colliery would be in deep trouble unless their attitude changed.

"They were not performing well and I just told them 'Go on like this and you will have the first economic closure and they know I'm not joking'."

In Yorkshire, leaders of the NUM are due to meet four area directors today to discuss reinstatement and other issues. The board said yesterday that 250 men had been dismissed and 54 subsequently

reinstated. A further 170 cases are pending, involving miners who still have to make court appearances.

In South Wales, where 42 men had been dismissed, the union's area leadership has already held two meetings with local management and further talks are planned.

Four men—the lodge leader, ship at St. John's colliery—have been reinstated after being sacked for alleged intimidation.

A board spokesman said: "Meetings are still continuing with the NUM and we have made some progress."

The North East coalfield embraces Northumberland and Durham where 70 of 125 sacked men have been taken back.

Some were initially reinstated on a "daily basis" according to the board. A spokesman stressed that every case was being examined on an individual basis, and everyone will have the right of appeal if necessary.

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